

Written Testimony - SCR 1 - Designates Kiger Mustang as official state horse

3-6-17

To Chair Ginny Burdick, Vice Chair Ted Ferrioli, and members of the Senate Committee on Rules

From Carol D. Foley
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Thank you for reading my testimony in favor of designating the Kiger Mustang as Oregon's official state horse. I was born, raised, and lived my life here in Oregon. From as early as I can remember, mustangs on the range were part of my identity as a native Oregonian. We in Oregon *are* the West, and we are privileged to have these wild horses on the western frontier of our nation.

Several years ago, I hoped to realize a life-long dream to go out on the Steens Mountain range in Southeast Oregon to see wild horses in the Kiger Horse Management Area. We weren't fortunate that day to see the horses. However, in 2015 we attended the "Kiger Khrome" adoption event in Burns where we did see many Kigers of all ages. Their hardiness, intelligence, and grace was so impressive that ever since I have wanted to better understand their character.

We've learned that Kiger Mustangs are unique among wild horses in their mustang lineage, and are known as one of the best remaining examples of the Spanish Mustang. The history of Spanish horses in North America goes back hundreds of years. Today they are identified by their physical markings including dorsal stripe, leg markings, ears, and overall color. Their breed is also confirmed by DNA genetic identification.

By naming the Kiger Mustang the official Oregon state horse, a greater segment of the Oregon public will know their story, including their unique character and history. More Oregonians will know how fortunate we are to have this rare resource.

We plan to go back to the Steens this summer and try again to see them grazing on the range. Thank you again for the opportunity to place this testimony before you today.