

"September, 10, 2013

Congressman Ed Whitfield  
1403 South Main Street  
Hopkinsville, KY 42240

Dear Congressman Whitfield,

Thank you sponsoring the "**Prevent All Soring Tactics Act**" (PAST) H.R. 1518 & S. 1406. Although no law can change a human heart bent on abusing animals this bill will give the moral high ground to those who truly desire to see this scourge be eradicated from the Tennessee Walking Horse industry. The artificial gates created by pads, chains, pressure shoeing, and chemical irritants have **held this great breed hostage** for at least 60 years and destroyed all credibility among equine enthusiasts.

Personally I have invested nearly 47 of my 60 years into this industry. My grandfather William Wirt Harlin Sr. was at the initial meeting in **1935** to establish the Walking Horse registry in Lewisburg, Tennessee. He established Harlinsdale Farm at that time which is still in existence today being run by my 89 year old father, Bill Harlin. Unfortunately like all other farms associated with this industry we have seen the industry decline because of those who continuously abuse this great breed through inhumane training techniques and therefore keep it under a cloud of corruption.

I have served as a Director, Executive Director, and Sr. V.P. of the Executive Committee of the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders and Exhibitors Association. Also I have served on the regulatory board of the past Walking Horse Regulatory Commission that had oversight of the H.I.O. inspection process of show horses and trainers. It was during this time that I came to the realization that the industry was **incapable of any meaningful self-regulation**, and **unwilling to completely stop the abuse of show horses**. In my opinion the monetary benefits derived from the soring of show horses seemed to always prevent a real and lasting end to this form of animal cruelty.

On **April 12, 1998** I came out publically on the front page of the Nashville Tennessean stating that "**we were at a crossroads**", and "somebody's got to do something and do it now [referring to soring] or this is going to get out of hand." The Article went on to say "Harlin worries that the increasing emphasis on the so-called big lick...has led some trainers to use unscrupulous, painful methods." Mr. Whitfield from that point on I was unofficially "**black balled**" from participating in the industry. In less than 3 weeks time I had 3 top champion breeding stallions moved from our stables by their owners due to my statements in the press. 2 of the owners told me that this was the case. Our breeding operation at Harlinsdale suffered financially until I made the decision a year later to leave the industry so my father could continue in business. Since that time I have watched the decline of this great breed that was unable to regulate itself. It was obvious to me that unless a federal law was passed prohibiting all acts of cruelty that the abuses would only continue.

Mr. Whitfield I still love horses and especially Tennessee Walking Horses. Your bill has given me a fresh hope that this horrible nightmare will eventually come to an end and the industry will be reborn. I do not speak on behalf of my father, nor Harlinsdale Farm, but only for myself, so I pledge you my support in your effort to take the right and humane high road

*to securing a better future for the equine industry. In addition I have contacted Tennessee Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn's office and asked her aid to relay a message urging Ms. Blackburn to support your bill.*

*Sincerely,*

*Clayton T. Harlin Sr.*

*Cc. Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn"*