

January 14, 2014

The Honorable Ed Whitfield
United States House of Representatives
2184 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Whitfield:

As a former owner of Tennessee Walking Horses I would personally like to thank you for introducing the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act, H.R. 1518. Your efforts, to bring an end to the horrific practice of soring, are appreciated by many people, and are long overdue. This practice of harming animals to achieve the high stepping gait, and championship awards has persisted since the 1950's and has become a culture of abuse in Middle Tennessee and around the Southeast.

For a number of years while living in Tennessee as a country music artist my family and I owned breeding stock, and young horses we placed in training. When a trainer informed us that "soring" Tennessee Walking Horses was required to compete in the "big lick" segment of the industry, we decided to disband our herd and dissociate ourselves from the breed. We would never want to see anyone harm animals, and we were not willing to allow our horses to be abused. Sadly, we like countless others wish the walking horse industry would change their ways, and begin to truly "put the horse first."

In our breeding program, we worked with Marty Irby during his time at Waterfall Farms, and are pleased to see he supports the bill as well. Please know we fully endorse your legislation, and welcome you to utilize this letter as you see fit for the furtherance of this bill. I believe the PAST Act will save the Tennessee Walking Horse breed and eradicate the plague of soring that has hindered and harmed these great horses for far too long.

Kindest regards,



Mark Miller
Sawyer Brown

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