



JIMMY PARNELL
PRESIDENT

May 13, 2014

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
326 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Sessions:

As you may be aware, the horse business has come under attack and we need your help in making sure an unreasonable response is not pursued by Congress.

The Alabama Farmers Federation has a long history of advocating for agricultural policy based on sound-science and objectivity. We believe H.R. 4098, the Horse Protection Amendments Act, by Reps. Blackburn and Rogers, and S. 2193, by Sens. Alexander and McConnell, offer a reasonable and science-driven approach to addressing an isolated issue among horse owners, while protecting the majority of horse owners from undue scrutiny through a subjective inspection process. I am asking for your support of this legislation, and, more specifically, that you co-sponsor this bill.

According to the USDA figures, horse owners are currently achieving a compliance rate of better than ninety-five percent with current Horse Protection Act rules which ban the practice of "soring" horses to accentuate a horse's gait. Unfortunately, there are a few bad actors that have brought increased attention to the show horse industry.

There are competing bills backed by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) in both the House and Senate that would effectively ban many other practices and standards used by horse trainers through a subjective inspection process. It is important to have a significant number of co-sponsors to H.R. 4098 and S. 2193 to prevent this competing legislation from moving forward.

To be perfectly clear, the Alabama Farmers Federation absolutely supports the humane treatment of all animals. That is why we are supporting H.R. 4098 and S. 2193. We believe these bills address the bad actors that are not subscribing to the humane treatment of horses, while preserving the horse show business by allowing those horse owners that play by the rules to continue to participate in events.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mitt Walker, Director National Legislative Programs, at (334) 613-4757, or by email at mwalker@alfafarmers.org.

Thank you for your leadership in supporting Alabama farmers and please let us know if we can be of service to you or your staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jimmy Parnell", written over a large, stylized blue flourish that loops around the signature.

Jimmy Parnell

