

**65th Annual Meeting
of the Midwestern Legislative Conference
of
The Council of State Governments**

The Fairmont Royal York Hotel
Toronto, Ontario

August 8-11, 2010

Resolution on Inspection of Equine Processing

- WHEREAS,** the closing of horse slaughter facilities in America has severely impacted the equine industry and curtailed the ability of states and tribes to control the number of excess and abandoned horses on their lands; and
- WHEREAS,** this has resulted in state budget increases and taxpayer costs at a time when states cannot afford unnecessary expenses; and
- WHEREAS,** this has severely impacted the livestock industry as a whole and, by eliminating the salvage value of horses, has significantly reduced the market value of all horses; and
- WHEREAS,** the loss of markets for horse meat for pet food, for the maintenance of zoo animals and for byproducts has greatly impacted these sectors; and
- WHEREAS,** the loss of horse products for export has eliminated more than \$42 million of direct income, as well as led to millions of dollars in indirect costs, because of the loss of value of individual animals; and
- WHEREAS,** documented reports indicate an increase of 400 percent in the number of starved, abandoned and neglected horses between 2008 and 2009; and
- WHEREAS,** U.S. Department of Agriculture ante- and post-mortem inspections are mandatory if meat is to be sold from the animal, and the animal must be slaughtered in a USDA- or state-inspected facility; and
- WHEREAS,** federal dollars are prohibited from being spent on salaries for inspectors who inspect horses before or after slaughter, making it impossible for operations that want to process horse meat to market this meat; and
- WHEREAS,** inspectors also cannot respond to a voluntary or state fee-based inspection request to inspect horse meat; and

WHEREAS, some states are investigating or have approved state processing of abandoned or stray horses; and

WHEREAS, given the current state of the horse processing industry, it is particularly important that the federal government not restrict access to inspection; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Midwestern Legislative Conference of The Council of State Governments urges the U.S. Congress to remove these restrictions in existing law and not insert similar provisions in subsequent appropriations bills or other legislative vehicles; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be submitted to appropriate federal, state and provincial officials.