

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6295

As of February 8, 2018

Title: An act relating to the sale of horses.

Brief Description: Concerning the sale of horses.

Sponsors: Senator Kuderer.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks: 1/29/18.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the seller of a horse to include a list of medications given to a horse during the previous 180 days from the date of the sale of the horse on a bill of sale.
- Requires the buyer of a horse to include whether the horse is being sold for slaughter.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, WATER, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Staff: Karen Epps (786-7424)

Background: Currently in Washington, it is unlawful to transport, sell, offer to sell, or have on one's premises horse meat for other than human consumption unless it has been decharacterized according to standards established by the Washington State Department of Agriculture. This law does not apply to:

- carcasses slaughtered by a farmer for consumption on the farmer's own ranch;
- carcasses in the possession of licensed independent collectors or rendering plants; or
- canned horse meat meeting U.S. Bureau of Animal Industry regulations.

Horses cannot be slaughtered for human consumption in any slaughterhouse in the United States. Facilities slaughtering animals for human consumption must be regulated and overseen by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspectors, and Congress eliminated funding for USDA inspections of horse slaughterhouses in 2006. This action halted United States production of horsemeat for human consumption, and in 2007, the last remaining

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horse slaughterhouse in the country closed. Congress has voted nearly every year as part of the federal budget appropriations process to keep the USDA from using taxpayer dollars to inspect horse-slaughtering facilities.

Federal legislation introduced in 2017 amends the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to deem equine, horses and other members of the equidae family, parts to be an unsafe food additive or animal drug. The bill prohibits the knowing sale or transport of equines or equine parts for human consumption.

Summary of Bill: In a transaction for the sale of a horse, the seller must include on a bill of sale, a list of any medications prescribed and given to the horse during the previous 180 days from the date of the sale of the horse. Additionally, the seller must include on a bill of sale a list of any medications prescribed or given to the horse at any point since the seller has owned the horse that would cause the horse to be permanently excluded from being suitable for human consumption in this country. These statements on the bill of sale must be made under the penalties of perjury and the bill of sale must state that these statements are made under the penalty of perjury.

In a transaction for the sale of a horse, the buyer must include on a bill of sale whether the horse is being sold for slaughter and if the horse will be slaughtered in a country that allows horse meat to be used for human consumption. This statement on the bill of sale must be made under the penalties of perjury and the bill of sale must state that the statement is made under the penalty of perjury.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill is intended to address a consumer protection issue. Horses from the United States are transported to Canada and Mexico for slaughter purposes and then that meat is sold abroad. The problem is that many of those horses have been injected with chemicals that are banned by the FDA for human consumption. This bill is designed to make sure that horses that are not fit for food consumption do not end up in the food chain.

CON: This bill is over-regulation on rural families. Europe has very strong requirements about the horses they will accept and they are handling this on their side. This bill does not protect Washington citizens. It is important to protect Washington ranchers and farmers first. A buyer's intentions may change over time and this bill does not address that. Owners do not have records of every medication given to their horse. This bill creates more problems than it solves and potentially turning innocent people into criminals. This bill is over-reaching. Folks are not raising horses to be slaughtered, they are pets.

OTHER: The bill is not workable for the Washington State Department of Agriculture. The Department does not have the authority to conduct private inspections for all horses and they do not have the resources within the Livestock Inspection Program to conduct private treaty inspections. This bill would add to the deficit of the Livestock Inspection Program.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Patty Kuderer, Prime Sponsor.

CON: Heather Hansen, Washington State Grange; Mark Streuli, Washington Farm Bureau and Washington Cattlemen's Association; Max Schafer, WSU College Republicans; Joyce Willms, Backcountry Horsemen of Washington.

OTHER: Brian Joseph, Washington State Department of Agriculture.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.