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**HOUSE BILL 2327**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2016 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Appleton, Kuderer, McCabe, Bergquist, Stanford, Pollet, and Moscoso

AN ACT Relating to the protection of horses and other equines from slaughter for human consumption; amending RCW 16.68.140; reenacting and amending RCW 16.68.010; adding a new section to chapter 16.52 RCW; creating new sections; and prescribing penalties.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that:

(1) Horses and other equines are not bred and raised as part of the human food chain in American society but are exclusively for recreation, sports, and service. They are defined as nonfood animals by the United States food and drug administration and are routinely administered over three hundred veterinary medications specifically banned by the food and drug administration for human food producing animals.

(2) Allowing the slaughter of horses for human consumption or allowing horses or their meat to be possessed, purchased, sold, bartered, or transported for slaughter for human consumption represents a grave threat to human health and life and should therefore be made illegal in the state of Washington and punishable as a felony.

(3) Horses cannot be killed humanely in large numbers, because they are head shy and inquisitive animals, unlike traditional food animals, and over forty percent of horses are still alive and conscious when slung and gutted in even the most modern slaughter plants, constituting an act of extreme animal cruelty.

(4) Equine slaughterhouses present a major pollution hazard caused by horses having over four times the amount of blood of cattle of equal weight, which does not break down into other usable products and invariably impacts local water systems when disposed of.

(5) In every locale where horse slaughterhouses have operated there has been an increase in crime rate because of the fringe element these slaughterhouses employ.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 16.52 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including RCW 16.52.180, it is unlawful for any person to:

(a) Slaughter a horse if that person knows or should know that any of the meat from the slaughtered animal is intended to be used for human consumption;

(b) Possess, purchase, barter, or sell privately; purchase, barter, or sell at retail; exhibit for barter or sale; or possess or transport with the intent to barter or sell horses or horse meat if that person knows or should know that the horse or its meat will be used for human consumption; or

(c) Transport a horse or horse meat if that person knows or should know that it is intended for human consumption.

(2) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Horse" includes all members of the equine family, including horses, ponies, donkeys, mules, hennys, asses, and burros.

(b) "Horse meat" means the flesh of any horse, including the animal's viscera, skin, hair, hide, hooves, and bones.

(c) "Person" means an individual, corporation, partnership, trust, association, or other legal entity.

(3) Any person who violates this section is guilty of a class C felony. Each violation of this section constitutes a separate offense, and each horse involved in a violation of this section constitutes a separate offense.

**Sec.**  RCW 16.68.010 and 2011 c 336 s 438 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

For the purposes of this chapter, unless clearly indicated otherwise by the context:

(1) "Carcass" means all parts, including viscera, of a dead meat food animal;

(2) "Dead animal" means the body of a meat food animal, or any part or portion thereof: PROVIDED, That the following dead animals are exempt from the provisions of this chapter:

(a) Edible products from an edible meat food animal by a licensed slaughtering establishment;

(b) Edible products where the meat food animal was slaughtered under farm slaughter permit;

(c) Edible products where the meat food animal was slaughtered by a bona fide farmer on his or her own ranch for his or her own consumption;

(d) Hides from meat food animals that are properly identified as to ownership and brands;

(3) "Director" means the director of agriculture;

(4) "Independent collector" means any person who does not own a licensed rendering plant within the state of Washington but is properly equipped and licensed to transport dead animals or packing house refuse to a specified rendering plant.

(5) "Meat food animal" means only cattle, ((~~horses, mules, asses,~~)) swine, sheep, and goats;

(6) "Person" means any individual, firm, corporation, partnership, or association;

(7) "Place of transfer" means an authorized reloading site for the direct transfer of dead animals or packing house refuse from the vehicle making original pickup to the line vehicle that will transport the dead animals or packing house refuse to a specified licensed rendering plant;

(8) "Rendering plant" means any place of business or location where dead animals or any part or portion thereof, or packing house refuse, are processed for the purpose of obtaining the hide, skin, grease residue, or any other by-product whatsoever;

(9) "Substation" means a properly equipped and authorized concentration site for the temporary storage of dead animals or packing house refuse pending final delivery to a licensed rendering plant.

**Sec.**  RCW 16.68.140 and 2011 c 336 s 444 are each amended to read as follows:

It shall be unlawful for any person to transport, ((~~to~~)) possess, purchase, sell, offer to sell, or have on his or her premises horse meat intended for ((~~other than~~)) human consumption or for any other purpose unless said horse meat ((~~is~~)) has been decharacterized ((~~in a manner prescribed by the director~~)) by standards established by the state veterinarian: PROVIDED, That this provision shall not apply to carcasses slaughtered by a farmer for consumption on his or her own ranch or to carcasses in the possession of a person licensed under this chapter, or to canned horse meat meeting United States bureau of animal industry regulations.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  This act does not preempt or preclude any county or municipality from enacting or enforcing ordinances relating to animal welfare.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

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