

SAFE Act Reintroduced in Congress

By [Pat Raia](#) | Jan 18, 2017 | Topics: [National \(U.S.\) Legalities](#), [Slaughter](#),
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A bipartisan group of Congressmen has reintroduced legislation that would declare horsemeat unfit for human consumption and ban the transport of American horses to foreign processing plants. The bill is the latest attempt to outlaw the purchase and transport of U.S. horses for slaughter.

In 2007, a combination of legislation and court rulings shuttered the last existing horse processing plants in the United States. Since then U.S. horses have been exported for processing in Canada and Mexico.

In recent years federal lawmakers have introduced legislation that would prevent the transport of horses to foreign processing plants, including HR 1942, the Safeguard American Food Exports (SAFE) Act, in 2015. That bill would have prevented equine processing plants from ever opening in the United States and would have banned the transport of horses to foreign plants for processing. The legislation would also have protected consumers from horsemeat derived from animals injected with drugs and other substances. However, the bill died before getting a vote on the congressional floor.

On Jan. 3, Representative Vern Buchanan (R-FL) and cosponsors—including Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Ed Royce (R-CA), and Michelle Lujan Grisham (D-NM)—reintroduced the bill as HR 113, the SAFE Act of 2017. Under the proposed legislation “equines raised in the United States are frequently treated with substances that are not approved for use in horses intended for human consumption and equine parts are therefore unsafe” for consumption. The bill would also prohibit “the knowing sale or transport of equines or equine parts in interstate or foreign commerce for purposes of human consumption.”

Lujan Grisham said the bill addresses not only the horse processing issue, but a public safety one as well.

"Horses are not intended for human consumption, and as a result, often contain unregulated drugs," she said. "We must end the export of American horses for slaughter abroad from both a moral and public health standpoint."

The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Agriculture where it remains pending.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Pat Raia is a veteran journalist who enjoys covering equine welfare, industry, and news. In her spare time, she enjoys riding her Tennessee Walking Horse, Sonny.



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POLL: Colic Surgery

How likely would you be to have colic surgery for your horse if it was necessary?

- Absolutely, no hesitation.
- I would have to consider the possible outcomes with my veterinarian.
- I wouldn't have colic surgery performed on my horse.

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