The Making of Unwanted Horses, A Quandary for the United States

- Content includes contributing factors such as the rise of the animal rights movement in the horse industry, the attractiveness of horses as a species to advance that ideology, legislative efforts as means to advance ideology, and economic climate impact to industry.

Teacher Guide and Resources:

Goals

1. Learner will be able to discuss the legislative process
2. Learner will be able to identify current legislation
3. Learner will be able to clearly express his opinions regarding current legislation

Common Core State Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RIT.1</th>
<th>Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RIT.4</td>
<td>Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIT.7</td>
<td>Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse formats and media, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIT.10</td>
<td>Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.2</td>
<td>Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.4</td>
<td>Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.5</td>
<td>Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W.7</td>
<td>Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.10</td>
<td>Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL.6</td>
<td>Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate</td>
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<tr>
<td>History/Social Studies G6, G7 (G8) Key Ideas &amp; Details: Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history of social studies (e.g. how a bill becomes a law).</td>
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Activities for this lesson

Lesson Four Herd Time:

Exercise 1: Student will find answers to the key-word matching list
Exercise 2: Student will watch and listen to “Schoolhouse Rock: How a Bill Becomes a Law” on YouTube
   (Computer screen or LCD Projector is needed for this lesson)
Exercise 3: Review Handout 2: How a Bill Becomes a Law

Lesson Four Pasture Time:

Exercise 1: Student will use information gathered from internet and the game board to follow the current session bill S. 1176 (in 2012) The American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act. The game can be used to follow any bill.
Background Information

Start with the generally accepted statement, "All horses should be treated humanely." Now, try to define a methodology for that, and begin to grasp the problem this lesson will address: the dilemma of finding a common definition for humane treatment. The argument occurs between the advocates of animal welfare and those of animal rights. It is important to understand the difference between these two philosophies, both of which claim to further the well-being of horses, with very different means and outcomes.

Animal welfare is a traditional model that directs stewardship of animals to their best use and humane practices, while setting the value of the animal relative to its benefit for mankind. The American Veterinary Medical Association describes animal welfare as “a human responsibility that encompasses all animal well-being, including proper housing, management, nutrition, responsible care, humane handling, and when necessary humane euthanasia.”

Animal welfare has been advocated for more than 140 years in the United States. Examples of organized groups include the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, established in 1866, and the American Humane Association, established in 1877. Local animal shelters, sanctuaries and groups, both formal and informal, are also instrumental in providing a safety net for companion animals and in some cases livestock. Animal welfare reflects the belief that animals have the right to be handled humanely and to live a life free of pain; however, animal welfare advocates do not believe that animals should have rights equal to those of humans.

The animal rights movement is a relatively new ideology that embraces the philosophy that an animal has rights and that those rights are equivalent to those of humans. Animal rights activists reject the use of animals for any purpose, whether or not the animals are treated humanely. Animal rights activists do not believe that animals of any type should be used in research, sporting events or entertainment venues, or as food. Animal rights advocates do not believe that animals should be used as work animals and believe that breeding and exhibiting animals in zoos and conservation parks is a form of exploitation.

The horse is in the unique position of being a livestock animal that is still used extensively for work and for recreation in both rural and urban settings, but in most cases having a relatively close relationship to humans. Familiarity with horses in those roles leads many people to consider them as companion animals rather than as livestock (which in the public mind equates to animals that are food sources). This public perception, however erroneous in terms of the horse’s legal status, has made the species an attractive vehicle for advocates of animal rights to use to further their goals.

Following the animal welfare model, laws and regulations were developed by government process at local, county, state, and federal levels to ensure humane treatment of animals. As government became more central to animal control and to animal abuse or neglect law enforcement, advocacy groups from both welfare and rights groups began to use the legislative process to advance their agendas through legislation and regulation policy.

A major piece of animal advocacy legislation was the 1971 Free Roaming Wild Horse and Burro Act, Public Law 92-195. With the intention of assuring humane treatment of wild horses, the act created a special category of horse, a protected wild horse or burro owned by the government with a prohibition on euthanasia and a commitment for the government to maintain that animal (if un-adopted) for its natural life, which can be 30 years or more. This special protection is being tested with complaints of damage to the range by overcrowding and undercounting. Advocates for more wild horses and burros proposed legislation to add millions of acres to the public range land currently used for herd

Now, nearly 40 years since the enactment of 92-195, a combined segment of those working with horses and those in the general population want to apply similar protected status to domestic horses whose owners cannot or do not want to care for them anymore.

The Effects of Protected Status

There are many reasons horses become unwanted, including illness, injury, age, inappropriateness (“outgrown” as too small, not advanced enough), temperament, expense, or being burdensome for the owner’s specific circumstances. In the past if a suitable home could not be found for an unwanted horse, and the owners did not want to euthanize it, they may have taken it to a livestock auction where it would sell reliably. Some horses went on to new homes, while others were purchased for processing; the latter established a baseline salvage value for horses that could not perform their intended purpose for their current owner, and consequently, it set a relative value for other horse sales.

Whereas previously a small portion of sale horses were sent for processing as human food, over the past decade successful legislative strategies at the state level (accompanied by arsons and acts of terrorism by animal rights activists) have closed all equine processing facilities in the United States. Since the plants closed, that reliable sale for low end horses is tenuous at best. The average value of horses across the board has been reduced by these changes in the market.

Proponents of banning processing of horses for food are seeking to require that privately owned horses be given protected status regardless of the conditions or preferences of the horses’ owners, first by making it illegal to process horses for food and second by closing the borders to the export of horses that might be processed for food in other countries. Efforts to advance this special category of horses are playing out in legislative actions at both the state and federal level.

The Legislative Process

Understanding the process of passing legislation is useful in grasping the impact of legislation on an industry. A quick review of the process will make it easier to see how groups with special interests have influenced and can further impact the horse industry though legal advancement of their agendas. (An exercise is included for the students to create a game board that illustrates making a law; Student Handout 2 on the process of making a law is more detailed.)

The United States Congress makes federal laws for the nation. Congress is divided into two legislative bodies or branches: the Senate and the House of Representatives.

When a Senator or Representative has an idea for a new law, he/she produces a rough draft of the idea and sponsors it, making it a bill. The bill is then introduced to the legislative branch to which the Senator or Representative belongs. After introduction, the bill goes through a process which can leave it unchanged, amended, or laid aside so that no vote can be taken. If the bill is voted on by the entire legislative branch, a majority vote will send it to the other branch where it will go through a similar process. If a majority vote is achieved at the second branch and both the House and the Senate approve all changes made, the bill is then presented to the President. At that point, the President takes action on the bill by either signing it into law, letting it become law without a signature, vetoing it or pocket-vetoing it (keeping the bill without signature or return to Congress).
Key legislative efforts impacting the horse industry include:

- **1971**: Federal legislation creating the Free Roaming Wild Horse and Burro Act Public Law 92-195.

- **1996**: Safe Commercial Transportation of Horses to Slaughter Act. This act requires trailers with adequate head room and floor space and prohibits double-deck trailers in transporting horses for processing; prohibits horses that are blind or cannot bear weight on all four legs from being transported; requires segregation of stallions and aggressive horses; sets maximum transportation times and minimum rest periods; prohibits the use of electric prods; and requires immediate USDA inspection upon arrival and provision of food and water after offloading. Understanding this act is important because most of the cruelty claims raised in the subsequent American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act were already addressed in this transportation regulation, had been in place and enforced by USDA-APHIS since 1996 and were helping to ensure that horses were treated humanely while being transported to plants.

- **1998**: California legislation created the “Prohibition of Horse Slaughter and Sale of Horsemeat for Human Consumption Act of 1998.” This legislation was passed by referendum vote; however, to date, CA has no convictions under this law, although the number of horses that are being transported to Mexico shows an increase. The CA statute was backed by a campaign group called “Save the Horses” and initially included a reclassification clause that would convert horses from livestock to companion animals; this clause was dropped from the legislation before the act was put to the public for a vote.

- **2003 HR 857 / S 2352**: The American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act. This bill would have created a ban on the processing of horses for human food, including prohibition of the sale, possession and trade of live horses for human consumption. In subsequent years, several versions of this basic bill have been introduced.

- **March 2007**: The United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit affirms a decision upholding a Texas state law banning the sale of horsemeat for human consumption.

- **March 2007**: A federal district court orders the U.S. Department of Agriculture to stop inspecting horsemeat at the Cavel International slaughter plant, effectively closing the last operating horse slaughtering operation in the United States.


- **July 2008**: Conyers and Burton introduce H.R. 6598, legislation amending Title 18 to prohibit horse slaughter for human consumption as a form of equine cruelty.

- **June 2011**: **GAO Study on the Closure of the Plants in the U.S.** The Government Accounting Office conducted a study on the effect of the closure of the U.S. processing plants on the horse industry and to some extent, on the welfare of U.S. horses. Originally this study was to be completed in March 2010 but due to the complexity of the issue, it was released in June 2011.

- **June 2011**: American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act S.1176 is introduced by Senator Landrieu.
A number of influences ranging from social ideology to economic recession have combined over the past decade to create a shift in the traditional use and value of horses as livestock. Wildly fluctuating fuel prices have increased feed and transport costs for horse care, while horses’ baseline value has been eliminated. Horses that previously may have changed owners five or six times over their 30 year lifespan, each time with a financial transaction marking the change of ownership, may no longer see that continued market value. Today many horse owners find continued ownership unrealistic or impossible following economic hardships or necessary lifestyle changes. Yet proponents of animal rights suggest that a horse have one owner from the cradle to grave regardless of the owner’s capacity for continuing care. The general public (and some segments of the horse-owning population) may not grasp the gravity of this conflict in horse classification and humane treatment. Today a huge majority of Americans have no direct experience with food production, harvest or hunting, experiencing instead a disconnected “meat comes from the grocery store” mentality. To this group the concept of killing and consuming an animal with which one is familiar is acutely uncomfortable; it seems to violate an unspoken social contract between human and animal whereby the human is obligated to prolong the life of the familiar animal (especially one deemed a “pet”) at all costs.

The horse is, undeniably, familiar and beloved, with a universally positive image, but that image is no longer necessarily agricultural; the populist view of horses has them moving from work partner or beast of burden to recreational partner and backyard pet. Those who own horses may identify the animal’s role (livestock or companion animal) by the specific purpose for which they use their animals, but those who do not own horses probably identify them most as companion animals. (Western Horseman Survey)

This attitude has contributed to the development of new laws and regulations that represent current concepts of humane care. It is also the vehicle the animal rights movement uses to promote transferring the equine species from part of the food and fiber industry to exclusively companion animal status.

The primary tool for this approach has been lobbying to propel legislation through emotionally laden marketing efforts. Unfortunately the legislation behind the emotional appeals has not addressed the necessary practical issues, such as adequately funded rescues and sanctuaries, capacities and standards of care at such facilities, and appropriate options for euthanasia and carcass disposal.

Resources for further reading

American Horse Council. 2009 Unwanted Horses Survey, commissioned by the Unwanted Horse Coalition
TheMakingofUnwantedHorses:AQuandaryfortheUnitedStates

1. Explain to the students the format of the lesson:
   a. Introduce the topic: factors contributing to the rise of unwanted horses in the United States, such as the rise of animal rights in the horse industry, attractiveness of horses as a species to advance that ideology, legislative efforts as means to advance ideology, and economic climate impact to industry.
   b. Distribute the Student Background handout (SB1-3) for students to use in completing the exercises.
   c. Herd Time: Provide students with handouts and worksheets. They can work on the Student Handout 1 vocabulary while you are going over the material with them.
   d. Pasture Time: Explain expectations for which activities will be used and how assignments will be checked.

2. The rise of animal rights in the horse industry:
   a. The trends in the companion animals realm are moving toward higher levels of care and management, from doggie day care to medical insurance. A number of animal owners are providing their pets with the level of maintenance that was once reserved for their children. The pet industry has begun referring to pet owners as pet parents. This attitude shift is being seen in segments of the horse owning population as well as in animal rights groups.
   b. The horse is in the unique position of being a livestock animal that is still used extensively for work and for recreation in both rural and urban settings, but in most cases having a relatively close relationship to humans. Familiarity with horses in those roles leads many people to consider them as companion animals rather than as livestock (which in the public mind equates to animals that are food sources). This public perception, however erroneous in terms of the horse’s legal status, has made the species an attractive vehicle for advocates of animal rights to further their goals. This may also lead many non-horse owners to think of horses as companion animals and some to attribute human characteristics to them as in anthropomorphization.
   c. Animal welfare reflects the belief that animals have the right to be handled humanely and to live a life free of pain. However, animal welfare advocates do not believe that animals should have rights equal to those of humans.
   d. The animal rights movement is a relatively new ideology that embraces the philosophy that an animal has rights and that those rights are equivalent to those of humans. Animal rights activists reject the use of animals for any purpose whether or not the animals are treated humanely. Animal rights activists do not believe that animals of any type should be used in research, sporting events or entertainment venues, or as food. Animal rights advocates do not believe that animals should be used as work animals and believe that breeding and exhibiting animals in zoos and conservation parks is a form of exploitation.
   e. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) split from the American Humane Association in 1954 and embarked on a more animal rights type of mission, whereas the American Humane Association continues today the mission of animal welfare that they have pursued since 1877. Many people are unfamiliar with the true work of the Humane Society of the United States. HumaneWatch.org, an animal welfare organization that follows the activities and expenditures of HSUS, notes that 71% of Americans believe in error that HSUS is in charge of
thousands of animal shelters. The HSUS has been extremely successful using legislation to advance its philosophy and in fact uses most of its resources to advance in this fashion. According to the Humane Watch public record analysis, of the nearly $100 million HSUS budget in 2008, less than one half of one percent was used to provide money to organizations doing hands-on sheltering for animals.

f. Refer to Student Handouts 1 – **Word Match** and 2- **How a Bill Becomes a Law**

3. **Legislation influenced by private interests.**
   a. To help introduce students to the upcoming activity, lead a brief discussion to assess the students’ understanding of the legislative process:
      i. How does a bill become a law? Who is involved?
      ii. Why do we have laws?
      iii. What makes a good law?
   b. Ask students to watch and listen to the Schoolhouse Rock version of **How a Bill Becomes a Law**: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-eYBZFEzf8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-eYBZFEzf8). You will need the means to project this video for the whole group or have them gather around a computer screen that is big enough for them to see the video.
   c. Ask students to read the content of the **How a Bill Becomes a Law** (see Handout 2).
   d. Legislative efforts can be used as means to advance ideology:
      i. At what point(s) in the process of making a bill into a law could animal rights groups or animal welfare groups influence the congress members? (Answer: by submitting ideas for a bill, providing expert input in committee, or during floor votes with pressure on congress members and through lobbyists – a professional who presents issues to legislators and regulators)

4. Divide into teams for building a game board to illustrate **How a Bill Becomes a Law**. Handouts provide illustrated game board examples. Note that the game board can be used to follow any bill. Poster board, magazines or brochures with pictures of Washington D.C., tape or glue and marking pens will be needed for groups completing this project.
   a. If time allows students to finish work on Legislation Game Board exercise, discuss how students can work together to track the bill. If not, determine and explain how they should work together to finish the game board (by phone, in person, or by internet).
   b. The game board should show the main activities that a bill goes through to become a law.
   c. A dice or a wheel with a spinner can be used to designate how many moves the player can advance in a turn.

5. Review how “Pasture Time” field exercise will be completed (in group or individually).

6. Review Legislation Tracking and Game Board exercises.
   a. Explain whether the legislation tracking exercise will be returned completed at the next meeting or given as take-home only. Suggest resources students can use to find information such as [www.Thomas.gov](http://www.Thomas.gov).
   b. Explain whether the “How a Bill Becomes a Law Game Board” they are to make (or are making) will be finished at this meeting or collected at the next meeting completed, or if time will be allocated to work on it or play it at the next meeting. Suggest resources students can use to find ideas.
## Lessons about the Unwanted Horse

### Lesson Four

#### Answer Key - “Herd Time” Student Handouts

1. Emphasize the words in this list as you present the lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definitions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Lobbyist</td>
<td>Professional representing issues to lawmakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Committee Hearing</td>
<td>Members of Congress meet to listen to experts on the content of bills that are being considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Veto</td>
<td>President does not approve (sign) a bill to become a law</td>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Constituents</td>
<td>The voters eligible to elect the politician to office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Proponent</td>
<td>Advocate for an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>Elected to the House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>Each state elects two members of this chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>House of Representatives</td>
<td>Each state elects members to this chamber based on the population of their state.</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Mark-Up</td>
<td>To make changes to a bill (by committee members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Veto Override</td>
<td>Requires 2/3 vote from both chambers to pass (a vetoed bill)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Animal Welfare</td>
<td>Believes that animals have the right to be handled humanely and to live a life free of pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Opponent</td>
<td>Challenges (is against) a proposed solution to an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Congressional Record</td>
<td>Document that records the title of all bills considered by Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Representatives or Senators voice support or opposition and propose amendments before voting on the bill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Pocket Veto</td>
<td>President does not sign or return a bill to Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Animal Rights</td>
<td>Believes that animals should have rights equal to those of humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Unwanted Horse</td>
<td>Horse that the owner no longer wishes to keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Hopper</td>
<td>A box that bills are placed in on the clerk’s desk (in the House of Representatives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>The document that describes a proposed law, act, or resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>The legislative branch of the government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. How A Bill Becomes A Law

The United States Congress makes federal laws for the nation. Congress is divided into two legislative bodies (sometimes called branches or chambers): the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Where do bills come from?
Two of the most common ways that a bill is created are by suggestions either from a member of Congress (Representative or Senator) or from one of their constituents (voters that elect the politician to office). To officially introduce the bill a Congress member must place the bill in the hopper (a wooden box at the Clerk’s desk). The Congress member is then considered the bill’s primary sponsor. Once the bill is introduced, the Clerk assigns the bill a legislative number, the bill’s title is recorded in the Congressional Record, and then the chamber’s leadership assigns the bill to committee(s) for review.

Processing a bill
Bills can spend a lot of time in committees and their subcommittees. Committee hearings seek input from experts on the topic and content of the bill. The information committee that members gain from hearings and research can be used to mark-up the bill (make changes to it that they deem important). For the bill to advance to debate, the committee must report the bill favorably to the chamber of congress. If they do not report favorably the bill dies in committee.

Being counted – the votes in each chamber
All the members of the House of Representatives and Senate must be given the opportunity to vote on a bill before it can become law. If the committee advances the bill to the chamber’s floor for a full vote, the Congress members in that chamber have the opportunity to support or oppose the bill in debate and suggest amendments (changes to the bill) before voting on it. If the bill passes this vote, the process repeats in the other chamber of congress. If the House and Senate have both voted to approve the bill any differences in the bill that came about in debate must be accepted or reconciled so that both chambers of congress agree to exactly the same language for the bill. If it makes it to this point, it is then sent to the President.

Becoming a Law
Bills must be signed into law by the President. The President has three options when the bill reaches his desk. He can pass the bill and sign it into law. He can veto the bill; if he does not approve of the bill, he must then return it within 10 days with his objections to the chamber in which it originated. The last option is for the President to pocket veto the bill, which means he does not sign it or return it to congress, in which case it becomes law as long Congress remains in session for the 10 days. If Congress recesses before the 10 days have passed the bill dies.

If the bill goes back to Congress, the chamber leadership can send the bill back to committee for consideration of the objections or return it to the floor for a vote. To override the President’s veto, both chambers of Congress must pass the bill with a two-thirds majority.

Additional Resources: THOMAS: How Laws are Made
Student Background

Almost everyone agrees that, “All horses should be treated humanely.” In today’s horse industry, exactly defining humane treatment is a major argument between the advocates of animal welfare and those of animal rights. It is important to understand the difference between these two philosophies, both of which claim to further the well-being of horses, with very different means and outcomes.

Animal Welfare

Animal welfare directs stewardship of animals to their best use and humane practices, while setting the value of the animal relative to its benefit for mankind. Animal welfare proponents believe that animals have the right to be handled humanely and to live a life free of pain; however, animal welfare advocates do not believe that animals should have rights equal to those of humans. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, animal welfare is “a human responsibility that encompasses all animal well-being, including proper housing, management, nutrition, responsible care, humane handling, and when necessary humane euthanasia.”

Animal welfare has been advocated for more than 140 years in the United States by individuals and by such organizations as the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and the American Humane Association (AHA). Local animal shelters, sanctuaries and groups also help to provide a safety net for companion animals and in some cases livestock.

Animal Rights

The animal rights movement believes that animals have rights equal to those of humans. Animal rights activists reject the use of animals for any purpose, regardless of humane treatment. They believe that animals of any type should never be used in research, sporting events, entertainment venues, or as food. They also believe that animals should not be used as work animals or exhibited in zoos and conservation parks. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) actively pursues animal rights.

The horse is legally classified as a livestock animal that is still used for work and recreation in both rural and urban settings, but that in most cases has a close relationship to humans. Familiarity with horses in those roles leads many people to consider them companion animals rather than livestock (which the public generally equates to animals that are food sources). This public perception has made horses an attractive animal for advocates of animal rights to use to further their goals.
Protected Status?

Laws and regulations that follow the animal welfare model were developed by governments at local, county, state, and federal levels to ensure humane treatment of animals. As government became more central to animal control and to animal abuse or neglect law enforcement, both welfare and rights advocates began to use the legislative process to advance their agendas, influencing legislation and regulation policy with the use of lobbyists (professionals who present issues to legislators and regulators).

An important piece of animal advocacy legislation was the 1971 Free Roaming Wild Horse and Burro Act, Public Law 92-195. Intending to assure humane treatment of wild horses, the act created a special category of horse: a protected wild horse or burro owned by the government with a prohibition on euthanasia and a commitment for the government to maintain that animal (if un-adopted) for its natural life. Now, nearly 40 years since the enactment of 92-195, a combined segment of those working with horses and those in the general population want to apply similar protected status to domestic horses whose owners cannot or do not want to care for them anymore.

A law to prohibit the slaughter (processing) of horses and sale of horse meat was passed in 1998 in California, on the heels of a 1996 national law that was designed to make the transport of horses to slaughter safer and more humane. This is an important law because many of the bills presented to prohibit horse processing since that time use claims of cruelty that were already prohibited in the humane transportation law. Bills to prevent processing of horses for human food were introduced in the US Congress in 2003; similar bills have followed in the years since. Various other states have successfully passed laws closing plants and prohibiting horse slaughter. The combination of these laws has effectively stopped horse processing throughout the United States.

Effects of Legislation

There are many reasons horses become unwanted, including illness, injury, age, inappropriateness, temperament, expense, or being burdensome for the owner’s specific circumstances. In the past if a suitable home could not be found for an unwanted horse, and the owners did not want to euthanize it, they might have taken it to a livestock auction where it would sell reliably. Some horses went on to new homes, while others were purchased for processing; the latter established a baseline salvage value for horses, and consequently, it set a base value for other horse sales. Since the plants have closed, that reliable sale for low end horses is gone. The average value of horses across the board has fallen due to these changes in the market.
The U.S. Government Accounting Office studied the effect of the closure of the U.S. processing plants on the horse industry and (to some extent) on the welfare of U.S. horses; the results were released in 2011. This report verified the concerns of processing ban opponents who had predicted the negative effects these laws would have on the horse industry and on the welfare of the unwanted horses. The proposed ban fails to provide resources for humane care for the unwanted horses. Opponents of this legislation can now show it results in increased neglect, abandonment and abuse of horses.

The Legislative Process

Understanding the process of passing legislation helps explain the impact of legislation on an industry. A quick review of the process will make it easier to see how groups with special interests have influenced and can further impact the horse industry though advancing their agendas in laws and regulations.

An easy and entertaining video of how a bill becomes a law can be viewed at YouTube, with a search for How a Bill Becomes a Law School House rock or by typing http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxT7QjlvDqM in your browser.

If access to a computer is not convenient you can gather the same information by reading the information in your student handout 2, in this lesson. After studying this process complete the rest of the herd time exercises with the knowledge you have gained studying the process.

Resources for further reading

1. American Horse Council. 2009 Unwanted Horses Survey, commissioned by the Unwanted Horse Coalition


### 1. Word Match

<table>
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<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lobbyist</td>
<td>Representatives or senators voice support or opposition and propose amendments to a bill before voting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Hearing</td>
<td>Each state elects 2 members of this chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veto</td>
<td>The legislative branch of the government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constituents</td>
<td>Document that records the title of all bills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proponent</td>
<td>Elected to the House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>Document describing a proposed law, act, or resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>Challenges a proposed solution to an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House of Representatives</td>
<td>Advocate for an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark-Up</td>
<td>Box where proposed bills are placed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Believes that animals have the right to be handled humanely &amp; live a life free of pain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veto Override</td>
<td>The voters eligible to elect the politician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Welfare</td>
<td>Horse an owner no longer wishes to keep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponent</td>
<td>Requires 2/3 vote from both chambers to pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congressional Record</td>
<td>President does not approve (sign) a bill to become a law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Believes that animals should have rights equal to those of humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pocket Veto</td>
<td>Make changes to a bill (by committee members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rights</td>
<td>Members of Congress meet to listen to experts on the content of bills that are being considered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwanted Horse</td>
<td>President does not sign or return a bill to Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopper</td>
<td>Each state elects members to this chamber based on the population of their state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>Professional representing issues to lawmakers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Making of Unwanted Horses: A Quandary for the United States

“Herd Time”

Group Discussion
2. How A Bill Becomes A Law

The United States Congress makes federal laws for the nation. Congress is divided into two legislative bodies (also called branches or chambers): Senate and House of Representatives.

Where do bills come from?
Two of the most common ways that a bill is created are by suggestions from a member of Congress (Representative or Senator) or from one of their constituents (voters who elect the politician to office). To officially introduce the bill a Congress member must place the bill in the hopper (a wooden box at the Clerk’s desk). The Congress member is then considered the bill’s primary sponsor. Once the bill is introduced, the Clerk assigns the bill a legislative number, the bill’s title is recorded in the Congressional Record, and then the chamber’s leadership assigns the bill to committee(s) for review.

Processing a bill
Bills can spend a lot of time in committees and their subcommittees. Committee hearings seek input from experts on the topic and content of the bill. The information committee that member gain from hearings and research can be used to mark-up the bill (make changes to it that they deem important). For the bill to advance to debate, the committee must report the bill favorably to the chamber of congress. If they do not report favorably the bill dies in committee.

Being counted – the votes in each chamber
All the members of the House of Representatives and Senate must be given the opportunity to vote on a bill before it can become law. If the committee advances the bill to the chamber’s floor for a full vote, the Congress members in that chamber have the opportunity to support or oppose the bill in debate and suggest amendments (changes to the bill) before voting on it. If the bill passes this vote, the process repeats in the other chamber of congress. If the House and Senate have both voted to approve the bill any differences in the bill that came about in debate must be accepted or reconciled so that both chambers of congress agree to exactly the same language for the bill. If it makes it to this point, it is then sent to the President.

Becoming a Law
Bills must be signed into law by the President. The President has three options when the bill reaches his desk. He can pass the bill and sign it into law. He can veto the bill; if he does not approve of the bill, he must then return it within 10 days with his objections to the chamber in which it originated. The last option is for the President to pocket veto the bill, which means he does not sign it or return it to congress, in which case it becomes law as long Congress remains in session for the 10 days. If Congress recesses before the 10 days have passed the bill dies.

If the bill goes back to Congress, the chamber leadership can send the bill back to committee for consideration of the objections or return it to the floor for a vote. To override the President’s veto, both chambers of Congress must pass the bill with a two-thirds majority.

Additional Resources: THOMAS: How Laws are Made
3. Game Board

Use your creativity to create your own version of a game board. It needs to have the steps of the process described; you will also have to determine how far the player can advance during a turn. For example, roll a dice or make a disk with a spinner on it with numbers or activities the bill goes through.

Here is an example of a game board project. It could have included a greater number of supplementary images, but the “capital” design won it high marks.

In this second example, students hand-drew images around the path to illustrate the process. Effort is also seen in the colors, design, and accuracy of information.
1. Field Exercise

Use the internet to gather the information you need to track Senate Bill S. 1176: The American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act through your game board. You can track other bills that address areas of interest to you.

Tip: you can find the tracking of bills at www.Thomas.gov.