COMMITTEE REPORT

March 6, 2014

**H. 4833**

Introduced by Reps. Clemmons, Limehouse, Southard and Hixon

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Read the first time March 4, 2014.

**THE COMMITTEE ON**

**INVITATIONS AND MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS**

To whom was referred a Concurrent Resolution (H. 4833) to memorialize the Congress of the United States to defeat H.R. 1518 and S. 1406 which would enact excessive guidelines relating to the practice of soring, etc., respectfully

**REPORT:**

That they have duly and carefully considered the same and recommend that the same do pass:

LISTON D. BARFIELD for Committee.

**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO MEMORIALIZE THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES TO DEFEAT H.R. 1518 AND S. 1406 WHICH WOULD ENACT EXCESSIVE GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE PRACTICE OF SORING THE TENNESSEE WALKING HORSE, AND ADOPT ALTERNATIVE LEGISLATION PROPOSED BY THE TENNESSEE WALKING HORSE INDUSTRY THAT ADDRESSES THIS ISSUE AND PROTECTS THE INDUSTRY.

Whereas, both H.R. 1518 and S. 1406 are pending before their respective bodies of the United State Congress; and

Whereas, both bills seek to eliminate the practice of soring the Tennessee Walking Horse by eliminating the practice of fitting these horses with weighted shoes and action devices; and

Whereas, while the purpose of both bills appears to be valid, in practice neither bill solves the problem of soring the Tennessee Walking Horse for numerous reasons which include: the information and photographs used to support both bills were compiled twenty years ago, before the industry began to reform itself, and are not supported by science or research; the current legal performance shoe and action device do not cause harm to a horse; and the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) reported on November 3, 2013, a 96.7% compliance rate with their current regulations; and

Whereas, the USDA has never prosecuted an alleged violator for a pressure soring violation; and

Whereas, other breeds of horses, which include the American Saddlebred, Friesian, Hackney, and Dressage, use the same performance shoes and action devices as the Tennessee Walking Horse. However, both bills do not affect the use of similar shoes and action devices on these breeds of horses; and

Whereas, passage of H.R. 1518 and S. 1406 would eliminate 85% of the Tennessee Walking Horse Industry--15,000 show horses valued at 1.3 billion dollars, 20,309 jobs in Tennessee alone, and a negative 3.2 billion dollar impact nationwide; and

Whereas, the Walking Horse Industry has proposed alternative legislation that would punish those who harm horses without eliminating a total division of an equine breed or increase the tax burden on hard-working Americans; and

Whereas, Walking Horse Industry proposed and supported legislation would establish a single, independent horse industry organization to manage the inspection and penalty process for the entire industry. This organization would establish objective inspection standards, impose strict penalties for any violations, and put the financial burden for compliance with these standards on the Tennessee Walking Horse Industry which avoids needless intervention by the federal government. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, respectfully memorialize the United States Congress to defeat H.R. 1518 and S. 1406 which would enact excessive guidelines relating to the practice of soring the Tennessee Walking Horse and adopt alternative legislation proposed by the Tennessee Walking Horse Industry that addresses this issue and protects the industry.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to each member of the South Carolina Congressional Delegation.

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