



BRITISH COLUMBIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Representing the Beef Cattle Industry of British Columbia

AGRI CENTRE - #4 - 10145 DALLAS DRIVE, KAMLOOPS, B.C. V2C 6T4 PHONE (250) 573-3611 FAX (250) 573-5155

Honourable Minister Lawrence MacAulay
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario
By Email: aafc.minister-ministre.aac@canada.ca

March 19, 2024

*BCCA File: 2024-018
SENT BY EMAIL*

RE: Bill 355 – Restricting Air Travel for Horses Sold for Slaughter

Honourable Minister MacAulay,

We are writing to express concern with Bill C-355 and its potential negative impacts. After reviewing the federal Committee Meetings on February 13, 2024 and February 29, 2024 we feel this Bill is not addressing the safety of all horses during air travel but instead targeting only those horses being transported by air for slaughter, mainly to Japan as noted in the meetings.

Within the scope of ensuring the welfare of horses being transported from Canada there must be consideration of the reason horse are being sold. For horse owners, selling an animal at auction is almost always a last resort but more cost effective compared to euthanizing and disposing of the animal.

BCCA is questioning the reasoning of the legislation and asking why the focus isn't on improved transport regulations for all horses transported by air if animal welfare is the issue. Why is there a difference between horses transported for sporting events and those shipped for the meat trade?

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency monitors and approves horses that are being transported by air from the time they arrive at the transport facility until the plane is in the air. There is currently only one airline that transports horses by air for slaughter which should make enforcing national standards of care even more achievable. The horse meat industry provides a source of protein to countries around the world that should be respected, without judgement.

We understand that horses are animals that illicit an emotional response from many people but we must make decisions based on science, not feelings. Horses require a reasonable destination for end of life and having appropriate markets helps to ensure that these horses are not inhumanely disposed of.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours truly,

Brian Thomas
President, BC Cattlemen's Association