

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 25, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House of Representatives
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
Appropriations Committee
H-307, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Chairwoman
Interior and Environment Appropriations Subcommittee
2007 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Chairwoman Lowey and Chairwoman McCollum,

We write to urge your continued support for the humane and sustainable management of wild horses and burros on our public lands. To that end, we request dedicated funding in any final spending package for the implementation of humane, proven and reversible fertility control, namely the porcine zona pellucida (PZP) immunocontraceptive vaccine by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). We are pleased this amendment to support this effort was adopted by voice vote in the House of Representatives as part of its Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill. This bipartisan amendment, cosponsored by Representatives Dina Titus, Joe Neguse, Brian Fitzpatrick, David Schweikert, Jan Schakowsky, David Price, Peter King, Ben McAdams, John Katko, Raul Grijalva and Deb Haaland, reflects a strong desire among our House colleagues to see that PZP is implemented.

We appreciate the Appropriations Committee's effort to support the BLM's horse and burro program in FY20 by providing more than \$21 million in additional funding over previously enacted levels. We also appreciate the Committee's efforts to promote agency accountability, requiring that the BLM submit a report to Congress detailing past expenditures and accounting for future program planning and needs. However, we remain concerned about the BLM's management of equine populations.

As a result of the BLM's mass roundup strategy and removal mismanagement, there are nearly 50,000 animals in short- and long-term holding, and this number will only increase if the BLM continues to rely primarily on a failed system of mass removals. These holding facilities, like the roundups themselves, are often harmful to the health and well-being of these animals. In fact, efforts to remove horses from the range without supplemental fertility control efforts actually *increases* population growth rates through compensatory reproduction.

The BLM's focus on roundups comes at a significant cost to taxpayers – \$48,000 per horse for removal and holding, according to the agency's data. The BLM's recent plan to Congress calls for accelerated roundups and is expected to cost nearly a billion dollars over the next five years alone. Instead of accelerating removals and stockpiling, the BLM should be directed to implement a robust humane, reversible fertility control plan with PZP vaccines. Compared to removals, this offers a much more cost-effective tool at around \$30 a dose. Most importantly, PZP is available now and proven to work: 30 years

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of research demonstrates the effectiveness of PZP, and the National Academy of Sciences noted it as the most effective way to manage wild horse populations.

As you consider funding priorities for BLM programs in the final FY21 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, we request that you retain the \$11 million in funding for humane, reversible fertility control that received strong bipartisan support and was adopted by the House. We additionally ask that you include report language that instructs the BLM to report back to the Committee within 12 months of enactment of the implementation plan with interim results and details of its fertility control program to ensure accountability and transparency. Dedicating funding toward humane, cost-effective fertility control and requiring the BLM to report its results is critical for the wild horse and burro management program to start on the path towards sustainability.

We appreciate your consideration of this important request and look forward to continuing to work with you.

Most sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



David Schweikert
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Deb Haaland
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Adam Smith
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Salud Carbajal
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Jan Schakowsky
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Vern Buchanan
Member of Congress




Gerald E. Connolly
Members of Congress



John Katko
Member of Congress




Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
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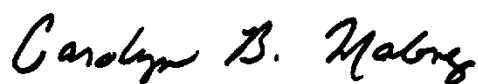
Ro Khanna
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Carolyn B. Maloney
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Raúl M. Grijalva
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