



Cordova for President

Moving Forward Together

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The United States Constitution

Article II, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution imposes only three eligibility requirements on persons serving as president, based on the officeholder's age, time of residency in the U.S., and citizenship status:

U.S. Constitution – Presidential Candidate Eligibility

"No person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty-five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States."

Legislation Proposal

Wild Horse & Burro Lifetime Protection and Accountability Policy

Official Campaign Policy – Cordova2028
Adopted: August 25, 2026

A BILL

National Principle

America's wild horses and burros are part of our national heritage.

When the United States takes custody of a wild horse or burro, places a federal identification mark on that animal, and subsequently transfers the animal into private ownership, the federal government's responsibility should not simply disappear.

Ownership may transfer. Protection must remain for life.

Under this policy, federally protected wild horses and burros will receive a permanent lifetime prohibition against slaughter and trafficking for slaughter, regardless of how many times ownership subsequently changes.

I. Lifetime Federal Protection



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Congress shall amend federal law to establish a permanent **Federal Wild Horse and Burro Lifetime Protection Status**.

Every qualifying animal gathered, held, adopted, or sold under the federal Wild Horse and Burro Program shall retain that protection for life.

The protection shall remain in effect regardless of:

- adoption;
- sale;
- resale;
- gift;
- inheritance;
- relocation;
- interstate transfer;
- export; or
- any subsequent change in ownership.

No sale, title transfer, contract, or private transaction may extinguish the animal's federal no-slaughter protection.

The animal's federal freeze mark, microchip, or successor identification system shall permanently establish its protected status.

II. Close the Federal Sale Loophole

Current federal law directs BLM to make certain older or repeatedly unadopted excess animals available for sale "without limitation."

That language must be amended.

Federal law shall expressly prohibit any person from knowingly:

- slaughtering a federally protected wild horse or burro;
- selling one for slaughter;
- purchasing one for slaughter;



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- transporting one for slaughter;
- brokering a transaction for slaughter;
- exporting one for slaughter;
- receiving one for slaughter;
- transferring one to a known slaughter intermediary;
- altering identification to facilitate slaughter; or
- using another person or business to evade these protections.

The prohibition shall follow the **animal**, not merely the original purchaser.

III. \$1,500 Global Wild Horse Protection Reward

The United States shall establish the:

\$1,500 Global Wild Horse Protection Reward

A reward of **up to \$1,500 USD** shall be available for verified, actionable information that materially contributes to:

- preventing the slaughter of a federally protected wild horse or burro;
- intercepting an animal being transported for slaughter;
- rescuing an animal from a kill pen or slaughter pipeline;
- identifying a federally protected animal at or en route to a slaughter facility;
- identifying a seller, buyer, broker, transporter, exporter, or intermediary engaged in prohibited trafficking;
- identifying fraudulent adoption or purchase activity;
- discovering an organized slaughter-trafficking operation;
- locating unlawfully transferred animals;
- recovering protected animals;
- a civil enforcement action;
- an arrest;
- criminal charges;
- prosecution; or
- conviction.



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Prevention Comes First

An animal does not have to be killed for a reward to be earned.

A person who provides information that stops a slaughter before it occurs should be eligible for the reward.

Our objective is not to document dead horses.

Our objective is to save living ones.

IV. Worldwide Eligibility

The reward program shall be open to qualifying individuals regardless of citizenship or nationality.

A person may submit qualifying information from:

- the United States;
- Canada;
- Mexico; or
- any other country.

If an individual outside the United States identifies a federally protected American wild horse or burro entering a slaughter pipeline, that person should be able to report it and qualify for the same federal reward.

Payments shall remain subject to applicable United States sanctions, anti-money-laundering, identity-verification, appropriations, and Treasury requirements.

V. Secure International Tip System



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The federal government shall establish a **Wild Horse Protection Hotline and Secure Reporting Portal**.

The system shall permit submission of:

- photographs;
- video;
- federal freeze marks;
- microchip numbers;
- vehicle license plates;
- trailer identification;
- auction information;
- bills of sale;
- transportation records;
- veterinary records;
- export documentation;
- location information;
- names of brokers or businesses;
- shipping information; and
- other relevant evidence.

Reporting shall be available through secure electronic means and telephone.

The program should initially support at least:

English, Spanish, and French.

Tipsters may request confidentiality.

Anonymous information may be investigated, although identity verification may be required before payment of a federal reward.

VI. Prevent Abuse of the Reward Program

A trafficker must never be permitted to profit from trafficking an animal and then reporting the crime.



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A reward shall not ordinarily be paid to:

- the person who intentionally committed the underlying violation;
- the person who knowingly arranged the slaughter;
- a knowing co-conspirator;
- a person who deliberately placed an animal in danger to manufacture a reward claim;
- a government employee reporting information obtained solely through normal official duties; or
- a person legally prohibited from receiving federal funds.

Where multiple individuals independently contribute valuable information, the administering agency may divide the reward based upon their respective contributions.

The ordinary maximum shall be **\$1,500 per qualifying enforcement event or case**, rather than automatically multiplying the reward by every horse involved in one shipment.

Congress may authorize larger rewards for major organized trafficking investigations.

VII. Permanent National Traceability

Every federally protected wild horse and burro transferred from federal custody shall have permanent traceability.

The federal record should include, as appropriate:

- freeze-mark identification;
- microchip identification;
- photographs;
- sex;
- approximate age;
- identifying characteristics;
- location of capture;
- federal holding history;
- adoption or sale history;
- registered owner;
- reported subsequent transfers; and



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- reported death.

Ownership may change.

The animal's protected status may not.

VIII. Transfer Reporting

Future owners of federally protected animals shall be required to report qualifying ownership transfers to the federal registry within a reasonable statutory period.

The transfer system shall be simple and accessible.

Legitimate owners shall remain free to:

- keep the animal;
- ride the animal;
- train the animal;
- relocate the animal;
- provide sanctuary;
- transfer the animal to another responsible owner; or
- otherwise care for the animal in accordance with law.

The federal government should regulate the **slaughter pipeline**, not interfere unnecessarily with responsible horse ownership.

IX. Enhanced Scrutiny of Bulk Purchasers

Large-volume purchases require greater oversight.

BLM currently distinguishes ordinary sales from group sales involving five or more animals.



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Federal law shall require enhanced review when a person, business, related group, or commonly controlled entity seeks to acquire significant numbers of wild horses or burros.

The review should examine:

- beneficial ownership;
- affiliated companies;
- livestock-dealer operations;
- auction activity;
- previous BLM purchases;
- prior animal-welfare violations;
- known slaughter-industry relationships;
- transportation businesses;
- export activity;
- prior federal-program violations; and
- attempts to circumvent purchase limits.

The government shall look beyond the name of an LLC to determine who actually owns and controls the purchasing operation.

X. Temporary Review of Large Bulk Sales

Large bulk transfers shall be temporarily suspended or subjected to heightened approval requirements until adequate traceability and anti-trafficking safeguards are operational.

Responsible individual adoptions should continue.

This policy is not intended to prevent Americans from providing good homes to wild horses and burros.

It is intended to prevent large numbers of federally protected animals from disappearing into an untraceable commercial pipeline.



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XI. Prospective Federal Trafficking Penalties

New criminal penalties shall apply prospectively to prohibited conduct occurring after enactment.

Knowing Slaughter Trafficking

A person who knowingly traffics a federally protected wild horse or burro for slaughter should face:

- federal felony liability;
- imprisonment of up to **5 years**;
- applicable federal criminal fines;
- civil penalties of up to **\$50,000 per animal**;
- forfeiture of unlawful proceeds where authorized;
- restitution for reasonable rescue and rehabilitation costs where authorized; and
- permanent disqualification from federal wild-horse and burro programs.

Aggravated Trafficking

Enhanced penalties of up to **10 years imprisonment** and civil penalties of up to **\$100,000 per animal** should be authorized where aggravating circumstances include:

- organized trafficking;
- repeated violations;
- trafficking involving ten or more protected animals;
- international slaughter trafficking;
- deliberate identification tampering;
- falsification of government documents; or
- use of intermediaries, shell companies, or nominees to evade federal law.

Exact criminal and civil penalty language shall be finalized through congressional legislative counsel and constitutional review before introduction.

XII. Identification Tampering



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Knowingly removing, changing, concealing, destroying, counterfeiting, or falsifying a federal wild-horse identification mark or electronic identification for the purpose of facilitating prohibited trafficking shall constitute a separate federal offense.

XIII. Lifetime Disqualification

Any individual determined through appropriate legal process to have intentionally trafficked federally protected horses or burros for slaughter shall be permanently prohibited from acquiring additional animals through federal wild-horse and burro programs.

Anti-circumvention provisions shall extend that prohibition to businesses substantially owned or controlled by the responsible individual where necessary.

XIV. Accountability for Past Conduct

The United States Constitution prohibits creating a new criminal offense or increasing a criminal punishment and then applying it retroactively to conduct that was lawful when performed.

This Administration shall respect that constitutional protection.

But constitutional protections against retroactive punishment **do not require the government to ignore conduct that was already illegal.**

BLM states that purchasers certify under penalty of federal law that they will provide humane care and will not improperly transfer animals into slaughter or commercial processing, and BLM identifies 18 U.S.C. §1001 as one potential existing law applicable to knowingly false statements.

Accordingly, federal authorities shall investigate historical transactions for violations of laws already in effect at the time of the conduct.

Investigators should examine, where supported by evidence:



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- false statements to federal agencies;
- fraudulent certifications;
- conspiracy;
- false claims involving federal money;
- falsified transportation records;
- fraudulent export documentation;
- obstruction;
- destruction or concealment of evidence; and
- other applicable offenses.

There will be **no retroactive creation of crimes**.

There will also be **no immunity for fraud that was already illegal**.

XV. National Retrospective Audit

Congress shall require a coordinated retrospective review of significant and suspicious federal wild-horse and burro transactions.

The review should involve, as appropriate:

- Bureau of Land Management;
- Department of the Interior;
- DOI Office of Inspector General;
- Department of Justice;
- Department of Agriculture;
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection;
- Homeland Security Investigations;
- Department of State; and
- other appropriate authorities.

Investigators should reconstruct the movement of animals using:

Federal identification → purchaser → auction → transporter → broker → exporter → foreign destination.



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The investigation shall prioritize:

- unusually large purchases;
- repeat buyers;
- rapid resale following federal acquisition;
- transfers through kill pens;
- unexplained disappearance of multiple animals;
- buyers connected to slaughter-industry intermediaries; and
- international export patterns.

XVI. Preserve the Evidence

Relevant federal agencies shall preserve records concerning:

- gathers;
- holding facilities;
- adoptions;
- sales;
- purchasers;
- bulk purchases;
- incentive payments;
- inspections;
- ownership transfers;
- transportation;
- complaints;
- investigations;
- exports; and
- known or suspected slaughter diversion.

Lawful preservation requests should also be used where appropriate to prevent relevant private records from being destroyed while an investigation is pending.

XVII. International Cooperation



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The United States shall seek cooperation with foreign governments to protect federally identified American wild horses and burros.

Initial priority shall be placed on cooperation with **Canada and Mexico**.

Foreign authorities should be provided with information necessary to recognize:

- BLM freeze marks;
- microchips;
- federal identification numbers;
- protected-animal documentation; and
- known trafficking indicators.

Where a protected American wild horse or burro is discovered abroad in a slaughter pipeline, American authorities shall pursue every lawful opportunity to:

1. stop the slaughter;
2. identify the trafficking chain;
3. recover the animal where practicable;
4. investigate the responsible parties; and
5. enforce applicable United States law.

XVIII. Wild Horse Protection Reward Fund

Congress shall authorize a dedicated **Wild Horse Protection Reward Fund** to finance the \$1,500 Global Wild Horse Protection Reward.

Subject to federal appropriations and fiscal law, Congress should consider funding through:

- congressional appropriations;
- civil penalties collected under the Act;
- forfeited proceeds where legally authorized; and
- other specifically authorized federal sources.

The reward program must be sufficiently funded to ensure credible tipsters understand that the United States intends to honor qualifying claims.



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XIX. Humane Management Before Removal

Protecting horses from slaughter is only one part of responsible wild-horse management.

Federal policy shall also pursue effective, science-based management that reduces unnecessary removals through appropriate use of:

- fertility management;
- veterinary science;
- water and habitat management;
- range restoration;
- responsible population planning;
- sanctuary partnerships;
- responsible adoption;
- independent welfare oversight; and
- transparent gather standards.

BLM reaffirmed comprehensive animal-welfare standards for wild horses and burros in June 2026.

Protection should begin **before an animal leaves the range**, not only after removal.

XX. Annual Public Accountability Report

The federal government shall publish an annual Wild Horse and Burro Accountability Report identifying:

- animals gathered;
- animals adopted;
- animals sold;
- animals remaining in federal care;
- bulk sales;
- ownership-transfer compliance;



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- suspected trafficking cases;
- investigations opened;
- enforcement referrals;
- animals rescued or recovered;
- international trafficking cases;
- tips received;
- qualifying rewards paid; and
- aggregate reward expenditures.

BLM reported **3,718 wild horses and burros sold during FY2025, compared with 1,509 during FY2024**, demonstrating why meaningful traceability and oversight are necessary.

Confidential identifying information concerning tipsters shall remain protected.

XXI. The American Commitment

A wild horse should never become disposable simply because the government completed a sale.

When the United States gathers an animal from America's public lands and places a federal mark upon that animal, we assume a responsibility that should survive a change in ownership.

We will protect responsible horse owners.

We will support responsible adoption.

We will pursue humane and scientifically responsible range management.

But we will close the slaughter pipeline.

We will follow the money.

We will follow the records.

We will hold traffickers accountable under the law.

And we will empower people anywhere in the world to help us find and protect these animals.



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Ownership Can Transfer. Protection Cannot.

\$1,500 Global Wild Horse Protection Reward

See it. Report it. Stop it.

Lifetime protection for America's wild horses and burros.