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Equine Welfare Experts to Converge on Wellington

CHICAGO, (EWA) – Equine welfare advocates from several countries will meet this weekend at the fourth annual International Equine Conference (IEC). Invited guests who are expected to attend include Governor Charlie Crist, and Representatives Ted Deutch and Patrick Murphy. The IEC is organized by the Equine Welfare Alliance and Wild Horse Freedom Federation, and will be hosted by Victoria McCullough at her estate in Wellington, FL. The event brings together a wide spectrum of people dedicated to the welfare of domestic equines and the protection of wild horses and burros.

Speakers will address issues ranging from the plight of cart horses in Israel, to saving a nearly extinct Abaco Island horse. Representatives from the Canadian Horse Defence Coalition will give update reports on horse slaughter in Canada and the dangers of the hormone replacement therapy that is derived from pregnant mare urine.

The event provides both an educational and a coordinating function. The first conference grew out of alarm caused in 2011 when a ban on funding for horse slaughter inspections was dropped from the Agriculture budget, leaving the way open for horse slaughter to return to the US.

The last US horse slaughter plants were closed in 2007 under state laws and kept from moving to other states by the inspections ban. Since 2011, the concerted effort of the welfare advocates, and especially Victoria McCullough herself, has resulted in the restoration of the ban.

"We dodged a bullet in keeping the plants from coming back," explained EWA's Vice President Vicki Tobin, "but over a hundred thousand of our horses are still going over the border to slaughter in Canada and Mexico."

The Equine Welfare Alliance (EWA) is a dues-free 501c4, umbrella organization with over 325 member organizations, the Southern Cherokee Government and over 1,100 individual members worldwide in 22 countries. The organization focuses its efforts on the welfare of all equines and the preservation of wild equids. www.equinewelfarealliance.org

Wild Horse Freedom Federation (WHFF) is a registered, Texas non-profit corporation with federal 501(c)3 status. WHFF puts people between America's wild equids and extinction through targeted litigation against governmental agencies whose documented agendas include the eradication of wild horse and burros from public, federal and state lands. www.wildhorsefreedomfederation.org