

June 4, 2019

The Honorable Raul M. Grijalva
Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva,

Thank you for your tireless efforts to protect America's wild horses and burros. I am writing today to urgently request your assistance with the \$6,000,000 "pilot program" that was approved by the [House Appropriations Committee for Fiscal Year 2020](#) on May 22, 2019. We are concerned that the intended future "scale up" of this program will irreparably damage the U.S. Wild Horse and Burro Program. We urge the House Committee on Natural Resources to immediately call for a hearing to revise the language of this proposal and provide oversight to the BLM in its implementation.

In April 2019 two animal welfare groups, along with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and other private interests, proposed a new wild horse and burro management plan titled *The Path Forward for Management of BLM's Wild Horses and Burros*. Sadly, not one group with knowledge of the complexities of on-range management was invited to the table when this plan was being drafted. After its release, TCF worked with the animal welfare groups who co-authored the document, asking them to provide for accountability and oversight of the BLM and to use science to drive the management of these federally protected species.

The current appropriations language allows BLM total discretion without any accountability or safeguards. This lack of oversight could allow BLM to falsely claim that humane fertility control doesn't work and to instead opt for large-scale removals without protections for the animals removed and without explicitly prohibiting irreversible, inhumane fertility control measures such as brutal ovariectomy.

Before any "pilot program" begins, issues such as BLM failed management strategies must be discussed. This includes the lack of transparency and science behind AML and their reluctance to employ cost-effective, proven, reversible, humane fertility control methods.

TCF would gladly participate in a hearing and continue to offer our expertise in relation to the pilot program based on *The Path Forward for Management of BLM's Wild Horses and Burros*, and our legitimate concerns if the tenets of this proposal are implemented on a large scale.

Mr. Chairman, thank you in advance for your assistance. I humbly suggest that this may be the perfect opportunity to step back and ask ourselves, "where *should* we be going with our wild horse and burro program?" It's a complex issue that needs innovative, science-based solutions, and we believe the House Committee on Natural Resources can provide true guidance towards a productive and humane solution.

Sincerely,



Ginger Kathrens
Humane Advocate, BLM National Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board
Director, The Cloud Foundation

