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The Ejiao Act (H.R. 6021) led by Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA)

The Horse Transportation Safety Act (H.R. 4241) led by Reps. Steve Cohen (D-TN), Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), and Dina Titus (D-NV)



# *The Ejiao Act (H.R. 6021) would ban the sale and trade of ejiao products in the United States.*

- Ejiao (“eh-gee-yow”) is gelatin made from boiling donkey hides
- Used in some traditional Chinese remedies, supplements, cosmetics, aphrodisiacs, and foods
- The U.S. is the third largest importer of products containing ejiao (approx. \$12 million in annual imports each year)
- Demand has risen dramatically in the last few years; an estimated 4.8 million hides used annually
- Donkeys who fall victim to this trade suffer immensely – from appalling transport conditions without water, food, or rest to being bludgeoned to death



Donkeys are  
valued and  
trusted  
companions  
around the  
world.





September 5, 2024

The Honorable Letitia James  
Attorney General, State of New York  
Office of the New York State Attorney General  
The Capitol  
Albany NY 12224-0341

Via email

**RE: Requesting enforcement to prohibit consumption of equine parts**

Dear Attorney General James:

In December of 2023, New York became the fifth state to ban the slaughter of horses for human consumption (after Texas, California, Illinois, and New Jersey) following Governor Hochul's signing of S.2163B/A.5109A.<sup>1</sup> This comprehensive legislation built upon an earlier prohibition passed by the New York State Legislature in 2021 regarding the slaughter of racehorses specifically. As the bill's "summary of specific provisions" states, "[t]he term 'horse' includes all members of the equine family, including horses, ponies, donkeys, mules, asses, and burros. The term horse flesh means any part of the horse's body."<sup>2</sup>

Our organizations are gratified that the state of New York has taken this significant step to protect equines; our thousands of supporters in the state care deeply about this issue and we continue to advocate for a federal prohibition on the slaughter of equines for human consumption. A number of our groups have direct experience taking in and rehoming at-risk horses, donkeys, and mules. And as animal protection and equine rescues, we are all committed to advancing the humane treatment of equines.

While S.2163B/A.5109A is associated with stemming the export of American horses to slaughter abroad, its broader prohibition extending to all equines puts New York on solid ground to also help curb the growing global trade in donkey skins for the production of a gelatin known as "ejiao." Despite the lack of proven health benefits, ejiao is used in some traditional Chinese remedies, cosmetics, supplements, aphrodisiacs, and foods. The United States is the third largest importer of ejiao products, with an estimated \$12 million in imports each year.<sup>3</sup> Many of these products can be readily purchased online.

Unfortunately, the ejiao industry claims the lives of millions of donkeys each year. Donkeys that fall victim to the trade endure immense suffering, including appalling transport conditions without food, water, or rest, arriving at slaughterhouses with severe wounds and infections, and being beaten and subjected to unsuccessful stunning attempts prior to slaughter.<sup>4,5</sup> As the skins are the valuable part, there is no incentive to ensure the welfare of these animals, or even to keep them alive during transport.

<sup>1</sup> The ban went into effect on April 11, 2024.

<sup>2</sup> Full text available: <https://www.nysenate.gov/node/12013557>

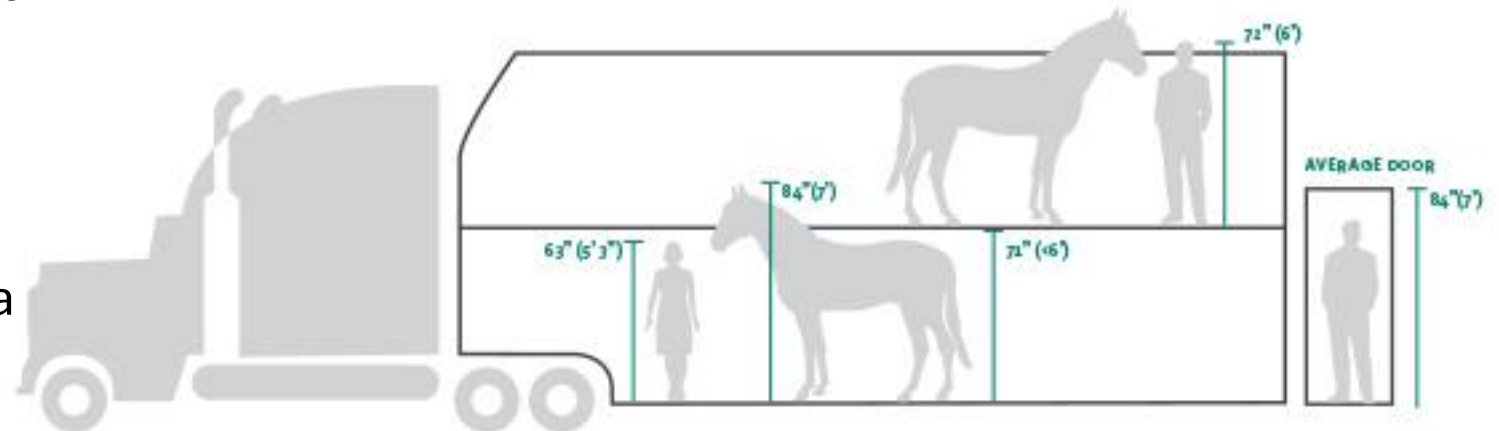
<sup>3</sup> "Ejiao and the Donkey Hide Trade." Congressional Research Service. March 3, 2023. Available: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47441>

<sup>4</sup> "Under the Skin." The Donkey Sanctuary. November 2019. Available: <https://www.thedonkeysanctuary.org.uk/sites/uk/files/2019-11/under-the-skin-report-revised-2019.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> As the New York legislation's Summary of Specific Provisions and Justification explain, it seeks to spare equines from the "callous treatment" and "prolonged suffering" associated with their slaughter.

# *The Horse Transportation Safety Act (H.R. 4241) would prohibit hauling horses in double-deck trailers in interstate transport*

- Such trailers are designed for shorter animals
- Passed House twice (2020 and 2021)
- According to USDA: “We do not believe that equines can be safely and humanely transported on a conveyance that has an animal cargo space divided into two or more stacked levels.”
- Endorsed by AVMA, which recommends trailers have at least a 7-8-foot head clearance for horses. Double-deck trailers typically have a clearance of approx. 4-5 feet.



- Both the Ejiao Act and the Horse Transportation Safety Act have only been introduced in the House
- Educate your Senators on the issue and ask them to introduce these bills in the Senate!
- Look up lawmakers in AWI's Compassion Index to see which bills they're cosponsoring:  
[www.compassionindex.org](http://www.compassionindex.org)



Thank you!  
Questions? [joanna@awionline.org](mailto:joanna@awionline.org)

