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Assateague Island Association (AIA), the official friends group of Assateague Island National Seashore, works diligently with our supporters to promote the preservation and education of the island and its wildlife. One project, close to our hearts, is a "FED HORSE IS A DEAD HORSE" campaign intended to make island visitors aware that horses are to be respected and observed from a distance, not fed, petted or approached. Horses have been seen to ingest anything offered to them as they are curious, which is beyond troubling (see photo with balloon string hanging from mouth of horse), and, of course, the balloons wreak havoc with sea animals. Additionally, balloons that are released can be found in quantities on the beach and our supporters are known for collecting them to dispose of properly.

We wholly endorse this bill and will continue to help with education and awareness. Please let us know what we can do to support this. Thank you for helping to protect "A Little Slice of Heaven" in Maryland.

Have a great week!

Sincerely,

Nancy E. Gaither

Assateague Island Board President

MISSION STATEMENT: **Assateague Island Alliance** (AIA) is a non-profit 501c3 friends group partnering with the Assateague Island National Seashore to promote the awareness and protection of the island's wildlife and natural resources for the enjoyment of current and future generations.