



Riding To a Different Beat

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To the Maryland House Economic Matters Committee

Ref: HB 1502 OPPOSED (Fireworks)

I am submitting this written testimony against HB 1502 on behalf of our average 300 family members, and as an Association Member of the Maryland Horse Council (MHC). I am not opposed to the beautiful public displays of fireworks around the New Year and Fourth of July holidays like so many cities put on by trained professionals. I am opposed to legalizing the sale of fireworks.

Horses are fight or flight animals. They obviously have no means to fight off a threatening display of fireworks that can seem as if the sky might be falling down around them. So, their natural instinct is to run wildly trying to escape the barrage of noises and explosions that can send them barreling through fences and down public streets. Securing them inside a barn or stall can leave them circling madly and prone to fractured legs and necks. Some of our members who live in proximity to public holiday firework displays actually move their horses to safer areas for a few days to protect them.

National statistics show there is a 31% increase in the number of missing pets reported to animal shelters and animal control agencies around these same holiday firework displays. Pets kept indoors are traumatized requiring special medications.

I can only imagine how traumatic fireworks must be to our military veterans with PTSD.

Sadly, the average person who might purchase and set off fireworks in their neighborhood might not think about these facts; or the draught conditions we have been experiencing here in Maryland. Last year in the height of the draught, my neighbor put on a beautiful fireworks display across the street, stupidly firing into the nearby woods. Another neighbor ignited my horse's pasture!!!!

I implore you please – give this HB1052 an unfavorable report.

Respectfully,

Jacquie Cowan

Jacquie Cowan

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Anne Arundel Coordinator for TROT (Trail Riders of Today)
Event Organizer for Tuckahoe Equestrian Center
Retired Mounted Search and Rescue
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