



Millhaven Farm, LLC

*5830 Rolling Drive
Derwood, Md. 20855
millhaven@earthlink.net
301/963-0630*

**To The House Economic Matters Committee
Regarding HB 1502, Consumer and Display Fireworks — Regulation and Tax
From Diana Delmar, owner, Millhaven Farm
March 5, 2026**

Thank you Chairman Valderrama and other members of the committee for considering this written testimony.

I own a horse boarding business in Derwood, Maryland where the staff and I care for 42 horses of various breeds, ages and sizes. With this testimony, I will share just two of several incidents that demonstrate the peril fireworks pose to horses — with the hope it helps convince the Committee that allowing consumers to use fireworks is an ill-conceived idea.

On Oct. 15, 2021 and without warning, fireworks were set off at a neighboring property. Because many if not most horses are terrified by the sight, smoke and noise of fireworks, the result was a stampede that caused one of the horses to suffer a compound fracture. The herd was in a field, well over 150 feet away from the fireworks. These photos illustrate the horrific results that required the horse to be euthanized. Needless to say, the owner of the horse was sickened and heartbroken.





Here's a photo of another injury sustained by a horse I rehomed at a farm in Woodbine. The horse panicked and bolted when fireworks were unexpectedly set off a week before July 4. The horse survived but, as you can see, sustained serious leg wounds that took a considerable amount of time and treatment to heal.

It is also too often forgotten that fireworks are a huge danger to people trying to control terrified horses.

Despite current law restricting their use, we expect fireworks on July 4 — one of the most dreaded days of the year for horse owners. At my farm and others, horses have to be confined to the barn, no matter how hot and miserable. The doors must be closed to hide the sight of fireworks and we play loud music to try and mask the sound. We hope the smell of smoke doesn't reach us.

Fireworks put off by consumers on other days of the year are even more dreaded since they are unexpected and owners have no time to intervene, as illustrated by the examples above. Again — this is despite the current restrictions on fireworks.

Allowing consumers to put off fireworks will make the situation with horses even worse. The restriction of 150 feet away from a barn or pasture is woefully inadequate. Consider that many horse owners keep their horses in a field and don't have a barn; 72 hours-notice would be useless. Even for horses in a barn, setting fireworks off 150 feet away is far too close. In addition, wind can cause smoke from fireworks to travel for miles.

Horses have a rich history in Maryland and the horse industry is an important contributor to the state economy. It would be outrageous to permit fireworks that can cause suffering, permanent injury and even the death of horses so that consumers can have a few seconds of thrill setting off fireworks. It is disrespectful to horses and unfair to their owners who have to deal with the emotional trauma and expense that results.

I am a lifelong Maryland resident and would much prefer that our legislators focus on laws that *protect horses*, not laws that hurt them.

Thank you again for your consideration.

Diana Delmar