

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

June 17, 2022

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
Chair
House Natural Resources Committee
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Katie Porter
Chair
House Natural Resources Committee
Subcommittee on Oversight and
Investigations
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva and Chairwoman Porter,

In response to recent disease outbreaks at multiple Bureau of Land Management (BLM) off-range corrals and internal assessments documenting abundant mismanagement of equine care, we write to you requesting an oversight hearing of BLM's Wild Horse and Burro Program.

To date, the BLM has experienced uncontrolled outbreaks at two off-range corrals with the most recent beginning on April 23rd at the Cañon City, Colorado, facility which led to the deaths of 145 wild horses and burros. After autopsies revealed severe acute pulmonary edema, hemorrhage, and necrosis, BLM determined the cause of the outbreak to be bronchopneumonia brought on by the spread of equine flu and *Streptococcus equi*. This came weeks after a similar outbreak forced the closure of the Wheatland, Wyoming, corral and postponed an upcoming auction.

Naturally, it should come as no surprise that infections spread so quickly within the cramped confines of off-range corrals. The reality is that recent internal reports from BLM indicate a system that allows the proliferation of harmful diseases as well as other conditions that pose grave risks to the welfare of federally protected wild horses and burros.

After reviewing assessments of the off-range facilities evaluated this year, we are concerned about documented trends of inadequate biosecurity controls, understaffing, lack of recordkeeping, limited access to hay and water, and issues related to pen maintenance.

With the BLM planning to roundup at least 22,000 wild horses and burros, under the guise of reaching Appropriate Management Levels (AMLs) that are determined through unclear means and adding to the nearly 60,000 currently confined in BLM facilities, we believe an oversight hearing of the Wild Horse and Burro Program is merited to protect the well-being of captured horses and to ensure that the BLM is focusing its efforts on humane on-range management. We greatly appreciate your attention to these concerns and stand ready to work with you on this important matter.

Sincerely,



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



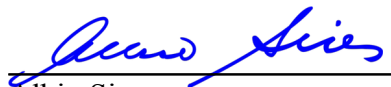
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



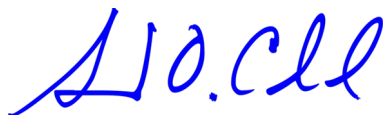
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress