To the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau;

I am writing you to express my opposition of Canada’s horse slaughter industry. Myself, and my fellow Canadians, are opposed to the concept of slaughtering horses as a solution for dealing with horses no longer wanted by the general public.

As you are well aware, the majority of horses slaughtered in Canada are purchased at auction marts. Geriatric horses, pregnant mares, blind horses, ex-race horses, compromised horses and carriage horses have all been documented at auction marts across Canada, where buyers for the horse slaughter industry have the opportunity to purchase them.

There is currently no federal or provincial legislation to regulate Canada's horse breeding industry. The National Farm Animal Care Council's Codes of Practice for Equines only recommend that responsible breeding practices be followed. As such, horses have become dispensable commodities, bought and sold repeatedly throughout their 25+ year lifespans.

Animal welfare violations have also been documented at each of Canada’s three federally licensed slaughterhouses. Over 33,000 horses were slaughtered in Canada in 2017 alone, the majority of which were purchased at auction. Horses are also naturally head-shy animals with strong fight or flight instincts. They panic easily in unfamiliar situations. The standard for slaughtering horses in Canada is done by placing a captive bolt gun to their foreheads. It becomes extremely difficult to efficiently and instantly render horses unconscious. Documentation confirming the difficulties of slaughtering horses show that this not a humane method of killing.

Rather than viewing horse slaughter as a solution for unwanted horses, I am asking that you support legislation that will regulate the horse breeding industry as a preventative measure, to reduce the amount of excess horses within Canada. With many horse owners financially vulnerable as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, I am also asking that you subsidize medical services by licensed veterinarians for equines, including humane euthanasia. This will provide owners with stronger incentives to keep their animals, and not view auction marts as their only option.

I look forward to your response on this matter.

Sincerely,

(name, title)