

Texas Statewide Voter Survey On Horse Slaughtering

May 2003

Summary of Survey Findings

- An overwhelming majority (**89%**) of Texas voters are unaware that horses are being slaughtered in the state for human consumption. Sixty-six percent state that "to the best of (their) knowledge" horses are not being slaughtered for human consumption, and 23% were not sure. Just 11% of voters knew that horses were being slaughtered for human consumption.
- A substantial majority of voters (**72%**) are opposed to the slaughter of horses for human consumption.
- A greater majority of voters (**77%**) are opposed to changing state law to permit the slaughter of horses for human consumption. Just 16% of voters support the change in the law. These strong majorities of opposition were shared statewide within each demographic sub-group, including party identification.

In addition, the **opposition to a change in law was intense, with 62% of voters stating that they were strongly opposed.** Just 5% strongly favored the change in law, and 11% somewhat favoring a change in the law to permit horse slaughtering for human consumption.

- Respondents were read the following arguments for and against the change in state law:

The slaughter house companies and their supporters argue that slaughtering horses is good for the Texas economy, its tax base and provides jobs.

Opponents argue that combined, the horse slaughter houses provide just 130 high turnover, undesirable minimum wage jobs and that the profits are sent overseas to the benefit of the French and Belgium owners.

Based on these arguments, just 4% of voters said that they were more likely to support the change in law to permit the slaughter of horses for human consumption, while 43% said that the two arguments would make them less likely to support a change in the law. Fifty-three percent of voters said that the arguments had no effect on their support for the change in the law.

- By an 8-1 margin, Texas voters associate the value of horses with Texas state culture, heritage and economy rather than the horses value as a simple livestock commodity like cattle.

QUESTION: Please tell which one of the following statements comes closest to your view: (ORDER ROTATED)

11%- Horses, like cattle, are an important livestock commodity and should be treated as such, including slaughter for human consumption.

81%- Horses are an important part of Texas culture, heritage and economy and add tremendous value as companions and recreational animals. They should be afforded a more humane end of life than slaughter for food.

Conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research
Sponsored by: Blue Horse Charities and The Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, Inc.
For more information contact Chris Heyde at (703) 836-4300