

1 A RESOLUTION urging fair treatment of horses roaming wild on public lands and
2 open country and in the United States.

3 WHEREAS, free-roaming horses, often called mustangs, have traveled in herds
4 primarily in the American West for hundreds of years; and

5 WHEREAS, some believe these horses to be descendants of horses left by the
6 Spanish during the early exploration of the Americas; and

7 WHEREAS, as this nation nears the third decade of the 21st century, the horses
8 have become a fixture in the American West, as exemplified by the 1971 Congressional
9 recognition of free-roaming horses and burros as "living symbols of the historic and
10 pioneer spirit of the West, which continue to contribute to the diversity of life forms
11 within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people"; and

12 WHEREAS, the United States Bureau of Land Management, a part of the
13 Department of the Interior, manages and protects the free-roaming horses; and

14 WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management estimates that almost 73,000 horses
15 and other equine species populate herd management areas in ten Western states, and an
16 estimated 46,000 horses are located in off-range corrals and pasturelands; and

17 WHEREAS, the Bureau of Land Management spends millions of dollars managing
18 wild horse herds through on-going monitoring, a long-standing adoption program,
19 euthanasia of old, sick, or lame horses, roundup and confinement in off-range corrals and
20 pastures, and limited sales; and

21 WHEREAS, even as wild horses are an established presence in the American West,
22 their existence has spurred ongoing debate from multiple viewpoints, including
23 complaints about their competition with livestock in grazing public lands, ecological
24 damage, exponential population growth, their poor condition in times of drought, and the
25 propensity of the animals to wander at times onto private property or roadways; and

26 WHEREAS, two issues have arisen of late that focus on the challenges in dealing
27 with the growing wild horse populations: a scheduled Navajo wild horse hunt and a

1 federal budget proposal to remove restrictions on the sale of wild horses; and

2 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation's Division of Natural Resources planned a wild
3 horse hunt that proposed to thin a herd in an Arizona trophy hunt area, but cancelled the
4 plan for the time being, citing concerns about the impact of wild horses on the habitat,
5 especially mule deer; and

6 WHEREAS, the Department of the Interior, citing increased costs of managing wild
7 horse herds, in a federal budget statement requested the authority to use all management
8 tools available by law, including removing some restrictions on the sale and disposition
9 of excess animals, possibly to slaughter market buyers;

10 NOW, THEREFORE,

11 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*
12 *Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

13 ➔Section 1. This honorable body acknowledges the political, emotional, and
14 environmental controversies surrounding herds of wild horses and burros roaming
15 American ranges and public lands, and the need to ethically and humanely manage their
16 populations.

17 ➔Section 2. This honorable body urges an even-handed approach by the federal
18 government and the Navajo Nation in dealing with the ethical and humane management
19 of horses through an exploration of options that include continuing adoption efforts,
20 research in fertility control, exploration of neuter programs, euthanasia when deemed
21 appropriate to end unneeded suffering, expansion of herd management areas, and sales to
22 only non-kill buyers.

23 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives shall send a copy of this
24 Resolution to each member of Kentucky's delegation to the United States Congress, the
25 chairs of the United States Senate and House Appropriations committees, the Secretary of
26 the United States Department of the Interior, the Director of the Bureau of Land
27 Management, and the President of the Navajo Nation.