



For immediate release: 13 August 2018

100,000 people call for urgent action to stop horses dying in races

Over 100,000 people have signed a petition calling for urgent action to end horse deaths in racing. The petition was started by national animal rights organisation Animal Aid, and has gained the support of high profile celebrities including Pamela Anderson, Ricky Gervais and Peter Egan.

The petition calls for an independent organisation to be established which would replace the British Horseracing Authority in its role as horse welfare regulator. The new organisation would have horse welfare as its only interest. It would take concrete action to stop horses from dying in races, in addition to focusing on others areas of concern including breeding and post-career provision for horses. Around 200 horses die every year due to racing in Britain, and 110 have died so far in 2018. Animal Aid believes that the British Horseracing Authority has failed to take meaningful action to stop these deaths from happening.

More than 104,000 people have now signed, and the petition will close at midnight tonight (13 August). Since it has reached the 100,000 signature threshold, it will be considered for a debate in Parliament. The following celebrities have lent their support to the petition, either by helping to promote it on social media, or by signing an open letter in support of it: Marc Abraham, Pamela Anderson, Dominic Brunt, Sam Carter, Sarah-Jane Crawford, Peter Egan, Jane Fallon, Ricky Gervais, Jason Gillespie, Jasmine Harman, Dr Christian Jessen, Evanna Lynch, Brian May, Tara McDonald, Emma Milne, Sara Pascoe, Dan Richardson, Carol Royle, Anthea Turner, Wendy Turner Webster and Benjamin Zephaniah.

Says Animal Aid Director Isobel Hutchinson:

'We are extremely grateful to everyone who has taken the time to speak out for horses who needlessly lose their lives for the sake of sport. The overwhelming support for this petition shows that the public are becoming increasingly outraged by the shocking death toll that racing inflicts. Time and time again, the British Horseracing Authority has failed in its duty to prevent vulnerable animals from being killed in the name of entertainment. It is time that the issue of race horse welfare was handed over to a body that will step in and stop the deaths. For as long as horses are exploited and used in this callous sport, the very least we can do is to stop them from losing their lives.'

Notes for editors:

- The petition can be viewed at: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/211950>
- For details of horse deaths see: <http://www.horsedeathwatch.com/>
- For more information or to arrange an interview, phone 01732 364546.