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Congressional Record S. 2343 - Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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These unfortunate animals have been subjected to all kinds of harrassment and inhumane treatment. It is unreasonable to expect any kind of living animal to be hunted down by airplane and thrill seekers.

The number of wild horses roaming the plains of the West is not large in number. This legislation will give the Secretary of Interior the necessary authority to manage these wild horses; protect them and maintain their numbers in manageable quantities. It is not intended that such a program would infringe on existing grazing leases now held by ranchers. It is what I consider to be a necessary step to protect a rapidly disappearing species of animals.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have the text of this legislation printed at the conclusion of my remarks.

There being no objection, the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 1090

A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to protect, manage, and control free-roaming horses and burros on public lands

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That it is the sense of the Congress that free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West and it is the policy of the Congress that bands of free-roaming horses and burros shall be protected as a national heritage.

SEC. 2. As used in this Act, (a) "Secretary" means Secretary of the Interior, and (b) "free-roaming horses and burros" refer to all unbranded horses and burros on public lands administered by the Secretary through the Bureau of Land Management except those to which private owners can establish their title to the satisfaction of the Secretary.

SEC. 3. All free-roaming horses and burros are hereby declared to be under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Secretary for the purposes of management and protection under the terms of this Act. The Secretary is hereby authorized and directed to establish and maintain ranges for the protection and preservation of such bands of free-roaming horses and burros which he deems susceptible and worthy of protection as a national heritage. The Secretary shall manage such ranges and such bands to achieve and maintain a thriving ecological balance among all fauna and flora on the range, and an environment within which such horses and burros may freely roam. Free-roaming horses and burros found in excess of available habitat may be disposed of by the Secretary, except that they may not be disposed of knowingly for commercial products.

SEC. 4. The Secretary is authorized to enter into cooperative agreements with other landowners and with the State and local government agencies and may issue such regulations as he deems necessary for the furtherance of the purposes of the Act.

SEC. 5. The Secretary is authorized and directed to appoint an advisory board of not more than seven members to advise on any matter relating to free-roaming horses and burros and their management and protection. He shall select as advisers persons who are not employees of the Federal Government and whom he deems to have special knowledge about protection of horses and burros, management of wildlife, animal husbandry, or natural resource management.

SEC. 6. Any person who violates the regulations issued by the Secretary pursuant to this Act or who processes or permits to be processed, into commercial products, in

whole or in part, any free-roaming horse or burro, whether lawfully acquired or not, shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both.

SEC. 7. Any person who allows a horse or burro to run with, or takes possession of, or molests, free-roaming horses or burros on ranges established by the Secretary under section 3 of this Act or who allows a horse or burro to graze upon other public lands without an appropriate authorization shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisonment of not more than one year, or both.

SEC. 8. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED
BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. MANSFIELD (for himself
and Mr. CHURCH):

S. 1090. A bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to protect, manage, and control free-roaming horses and burros on public lands. Referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, on behalf of my able colleague, the senior Senator from Idaho (Mr. CHURCH), and myself, I introduce legislation which would authorize the Secretary of Interior to protect, manage, and control the free roaming horses and burros on public lands.

The status of the rapidly disappearing wild horses has generated a great deal of concern throughout the West.