



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 28, 2021

Contact: Laura Bonar, Chief Program and Policy Officer

505-401-8936 (cell) | laura@apnm.org

Animal Protection New Mexico's Work to Protect Horses Triumphs Over Strategic Lawsuit By Slaughterhouse Boosters

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – In March 2021, after 5+ years, 5th Judicial District Court Judge James M. Hudson ruled against Valley Meat Co. and in favor of Animal Protection New Mexico (APNM) and other plaintiffs who had tirelessly campaigned to protect horses from slaughter and to prevent the opening of a horse slaughterhouse in Roswell. With the dismissal of this unfounded lawsuit, APNM can continue to build a stronger safety net for horses, mules, and donkeys and those who care about them across the state.

In November 2011, Congress failed to pass a budget provision that prohibited horse slaughter inspections, leaving the door open for resumption of slaughter operations in the U.S for the first time in six years. Early in 2012, APNM learned of plans to open a horse slaughter facility in Roswell and committed to doing everything possible to prevent that opening, working with community members including the New Mexico Equine Rescue Alliance and local, state, and federal policymakers.

In 2013, Attorney General (AG) Gary King filed a lawsuit to stop the opening of the horse slaughterhouse. And in January 2014 a Santa Fe District Court judge issued a preliminary injunction against Valley Meat Co., preventing the opening of the slaughterhouse until AG King's lawsuit was resolved. Finally, in February 2016, a state judge's ruling permanently barred the Roswell slaughterhouse from opening.

Disgruntled that their dangerous horse slaughterhouse plans were terminated, Valley Meat Co. filed a defamation lawsuit against APNM (and others), making baseless claims of malicious abuse of process, civil conspiracy, and prima facie tort. Like many lawsuits targeting advocacy organizations, this suit was meant to disrupt APNM's powerful work and waste the organization's time and resources.

"With the conclusion of this lawsuit, APNM can now focus all our energy on strengthening New Mexico's equine safety net so vulnerable horses, donkeys, and mules don't become victims of the gruesome horse slaughter system," said Laura Bonar, APNM's Chief Program & Policy Office.

Polling has shown that 70% of New Mexicans are opposed to horse slaughter for human consumption and 70% do not want a horse slaughter facility in their community.

###

Animal Protection New Mexico's mission is to advocate for the rights of animals by effecting systemic change, resulting in the humane treatment of all animals.

For more information on APNM's ongoing, decades-long work on behalf of horses, mules, and donkeys across New Mexico, please contact Laura Bonar, Chief Program and Policy Officer, 505-401-8936 (cell) or laura@apnm.org.