

Horses - Infectious Equine Anemia Testing

FOR the purpose of requiring horses or equines to [[have a certain test]] undergo certain testing before being allowed to be shipped into Maryland, and requiring these horses or equines to be accompanied by a certificate which verifies that the testing was performed in a certain laboratory and which displays certain information with regard to this test and the animals involved.

May 15, 1975.

Honorable John Hanson Briscoe
Speaker of the House of Delegates
State House
Annapolis, Maryland

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17, of the Maryland Constitution, I have today vetoed House Bill 1077.

This bill provides that a horse or equine may not be shipped into this State unless it has had a negative test as prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture within six months prior to shipment.

As introduced, the bill specified that the test to be administered was the "Coggins Test". During the legislative process, however, this provision was deleted from the bill, and as enacted provides only that the animal must have "a negative test as prescribed by the State Department of Agriculture." While the title of the bill indicates that its purpose is to require infectious equine anemia testing, the legislative intent is unclear from the substantive provisions of the bill. As the Secretary of Agriculture presently has the power under § 3-105 of the Agriculture Article of the Code to "test any animal for any contagious disease by any method", the purpose of House Bill 1077 may be accomplished under existing procedures.

The Secretary of Agriculture informs me that he is presently adopting regulations which will require the testing of horses entering Maryland on a 12 month basis. In order to evaluate the development of this program, the Secretary has requested that I veto House Bill 1077 which mandates a six month test requirement. A copy of the Secretary's letter is attached to and should be considered a part of this veto message.

For the reasons contained in the Secretary's letter and the unclarity created in the substantive provisions