

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2602

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<http://baucus.senate.gov>

January 13, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
S-221, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

I write to express strong concerns on provisions of S. 1950, The Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Enhancement Act of 2011. S. 1950 was reported by the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee on December 14th, 2011. Included in the legislation is language that would ban the transportation of horses in double deck trailers – an issue very important to me and my state. Such a ban would be burdensome for rodeo operators across the country, and this provision should not be part of this bill, or any, that moves through the Senate. The Senate must ensure a fair level of consideration and debate is achieved on the proposed ban before this legislation moves any further.

Horses helped pioneers and homesteaders settle Montana and continue to be an important part of our livelihood to this day. Montanans rely on horse ownership for transportation, work, recreation and competition in the form of rodeos. Rodeos are an important part of our western culture and the local economies in which they are held. Most rodeos use specially modified double deck trailers to safely haul horses, bulls, steers and calves to the events.

The rodeo is as much a part of our culture today as it was in the 1800's with more than 10,000 individuals participating in competitions across the U.S. each year. Additionally, rodeos can have a huge economic impact in the communities which they are held.

Put simply, we need commonsense policies in place to achieve safe conditions on our roads that don't include arbitrary bans on trailers that our constituents rely on. Rodeo operators in particular have a need for trailers that are specially adapted for their hauling purposes. I cannot support the proposed ban and call on the Senate to come together to put together a solution that will work. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Max Baucus
U.S. Senator