



Bill to Allow State and Tribal Management of Wild Horses Introduced

Introduction

On July 22, 2015, Congressman Chris Stewart (R-Utah) re-introduced the Wild Horse Oversight Act (H.R. 3172) and Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) introduced a Senate version of the bill (S. 1845). The bills would amend the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act to allow states and Indian tribes to assume the management and protection of wild horses and burros.

The Bills

The bills would allow a state or federally recognized Indian tribe to assume all management and protection functions of wild horses and burros within its borders, if requested by the legislature or Governor of a State, or the governing body of an Indian tribe. Currently, the federal land management agencies, primarily the Bureau of Land Management, are responsible for overseeing the wild horse and burro population. The bills would not alter any of the protections for wild horses under the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act and the federal land management agencies would continue to be responsible for tracking the number of wild horses and burros even if a state or tribe assumed management of its wild horses.

Status

The House bill has been referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources and the Senate bill has been referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. No action has been taken.