

Legislation restricting advocacy work of animal welfare organizations is based on a totally fabricated incident which sought to discredit Boone County Animal Control and advance needless legislation

Background Information – Animal Care Training Bill

According to the original sponsor of this legislation, the rationale for introducing this bill was based solely on allegations made by Greg Buckman, president of the Missouri Cattlemen's Association. Mr. Buckman asserted that Boone County Animal Control (BCAC) Officers were improperly trained resulting in a need to regulate animal care training.

Mr. Buckman alleged that he owned a 37-year-old horse that was in good condition and living in a pasture. Mr. Buckman asserts that due to a complaint about the thinness of his horse, BCAC attempted to seize his horse and that he was charged with animal neglect although the charges were later dropped, as he was able to prove that there was nothing wrong with his horse.

BCAC and the Boone County Prosecutor's Office, however, have stated that they have no knowledge of Mr. Buckman owning any horses and accordingly there were never any attempts to seize a horse from Mr. Buckman, nor were any charges ever filed against him.

BCAC stated that the horse alleged to be owned by Mr. Buckman was in fact owned by a Brian Brandt. BCAC stated that the horse in question was emaciated and in need of care as well as two other horses owned by Mr. Brandt. The real owner of all three of these horses, Brian Brandt, was charged with neglect due to the poor condition of the horses including the 30 plus year old horse that was referenced in Buckman's allegations about BCAC. The owner subsequently pled guilty to Animal Neglect.

Even if Mr. Buckman wanted to assert that these horses were in good condition and BCAC was wrong about charging the **real owner** of the horses, it would be without merit. BCAC allowed the real owner to have the horses examined by his own veterinarian. The veterinarian, whom the owner chose to exam the horses, affirmed that the horses were emaciated and rated them a body score of "2" on the BCS scoring system.

Here is the definition for a body score of "2" and an example photo:

"Emaciated; slight tissue cover over bones; vertebrae, ribs, tail head, and bones of withers, shoulder, and neck are visible" (continued on next page)



The body score of “2” was the same rating as was noted by BCAC when they examined the horses. Interestingly, the owner’s veterinarian found additional serious issues with the horses, and in fact, had to contact BCAC to report that the owner was refusing to follow through on her veterinary advice and directions to care for these animals. The owner subsequently pled guilty.

Apparently, Mr. Buckman’s only involvement in this case was to assist the owner in hiding the horses from examination by BCAC and impeding a criminal investigation. During the investigation, the horses went missing and the owner claimed not to be aware of what happened to them. It was later discovered that the owner had transported the horses to the property of Greg Buckman where they were kept hidden in a barn in an apparent attempt to prevent the authorities from locating the horses.