

February 5, 2025

Cathy Weeks  
52 Silver Spur Rd W  
Cairo, NY 12413

RE: SB 2331

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

My name is Cathy Weeks and I am in support of Senate Bill 2331 and would like to respectfully ask you to please vote in favor of this bill.

This bill would create the formation of a working group that would work with the Theodore Roosevelt National Park to help manage the wild horses. The working group could consist of stakeholders such as horse advocates, legislators, tourism, town of Medora, indigenous population etc and would work with the park offering their insight , knowledge, help and more. For example sharing the knowledge of the use of Gona Con and the danger of permanent mare sterilization. Since 2009 the park has aggressively been using the use of Gona Con and it should not be used for fertility treatment. People of the working group could help share this kind of information for the protection of the herd and show proof with documentation and make recommendations. I can only hope and pray that, as a group, the members would look into more scientific options/solutions for keeping a viable herd, such as PZP which has been used and proven to be effective and much safer. The park has been removing, year after year, the younger horses which leaves a very aging population and compromises maintaining a viable herd. Again, as a group they would work to find the best solution for keeping the diversity and genetic viability of this historical herd. They can discuss priorities for the Theodore Roosevelt National Park wild horse herd and maybe a proper management plan. By working together there would be no worry about the park trying to eradicate the horses from Park boundaries or very likely slowly help them die off by treating with Gona Gon when there are other options.

I live in New York and have been driving out each summer for the last couple of years to spend time with the wild horses and enjoy the wide open spaces. I met my first wild horses at the age of 63, but have dreamed of them since I was a little girl growing up on the streets of Astoria, New York City. I come to Theodore Roosevelt National Park for the wild horses.....not the buffalo, which can be found in so many other parks. The wild horses are the draw for me, and the hills, mountains, and buttes in your park present a stunning background for them. Where else can you spot wild horses amongst buffalo?

Also, I hope you will consider the impact this herd has on your local economy. Chasing Wild Horses focuses on this wild horse herd and carries merchandise showcasing the beauty of Theodore Roosevelt National Park along with the horses and other wildlife. While here visiting the horses, folks such as I spend time in your local restaurants, motels and businesses.

Please, let's protect these wild horses for future generations and allow everyone an opportunity to view and spend time with these majestic and magical beings. Please vote in favor and pass this very important, and much needed bill which will aid the park in helping maintain a viable herd.

I thank you very much for allowing me this opportunity to have my thoughts heard and for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Cathy Weeks