

September 27, 2018

To the AERC Board of Directors:

Many of us within AERC recall with pride when endurance became an international-level sport. This evolution, however, has resulted in changes we can no longer tolerate or support. We have observed with growing alarm years of corruption, egregious issues regarding horse welfare, attempts to influence through example, pleas to stay at the table, and letters, motions and new rules to address the problems to no avail. We have lost confidence in these efforts to produce real change on the actual field of play. The issues associated with international endurance continue growing within our sport. High emotions are dividing us, and the dilemma is compromising the sport we love.

The recent World Endurance Games, held on American soil, were not officially sanctioned by AERC, but relied on the support of many of our riders, horses, veterinarians, and members. Many sensed a coming disaster but had no power to prevent it. AERC sent a letter to USEF, expressing concern about a "level playing field." Connie Caudill, a member of the AERC Board of Directors, initiated a [Change.org](https://www.change.org) petition demanding FEI make changes to tangibly ensure equine welfare. That petition has garnered well over 5,000 signatures.

Despite the fact that the Tryon WEG was not AERC-sanctioned, our sport will forever be tarnished by this event. The competition was mired with avoidable controversy and competitors were denied a level field of play.

The WEG is the final catalyst after years of poisonous problems within USEF and FEI regarding international endurance. It is time for decisive and bold leadership from AERC. We must stand alongside other National Federations equally dismayed by the corruption of our sport and decisively shout, "ENOUGH."

We urge the AERC Board of Directors to respectfully decline executing the affiliate endurance organization contract/agreement with USEF until such time as FEI has made significant and tangible changes to enact and enforce rules consistently, without favoritism or undue influence by sponsors. We ask that international endurance cease to be run over courses allowing unfettered speed demanding few exceptional skills. Lead us in our return to more tempered, elite competitions over challenging, technical terrain that tests the finest in horsemanship, athleticism and strategy.

There is much that can be done to improve our sport in the USA and Canada as AERC. Let us focus on using our voice and actions to demonstrate to the world that we are different from what they saw at WEG. The AERC National Championship, just a week later, showed how elite events can and should be run.

We hope other National Federations will see AERC as a leader true to the foundation of our sport and invite them to work with us in building a new vision of international riding,

following in the footsteps of the Young Rider International Exchange Program, without the taint of USEF or FEI involvement.

Our AERC members and horses deserve a sport truly modeled after our motto, To Finish Is To Win. We call upon you to lead us forward out of the mire and into a future true to our integrity.

Sincerely (listed alphabetically),

Stan Alkemade, 8475, NE Region, Veterinarian, Former FEI Vet, Former Team Canada/  
East Veterinarian

Nina Bomar, 4165, PS Region

Elysa Braunstein, VMD, M31822, PS Region, Veterinarian

Kathy Broaddus, 11416, NE Region, Veterinarian

Dianna Chapek, 4093, W Region, Former Director, Pard'ners Award

Cindy Collins, 176, MT Region, Former Director, Ride Manager, WY Trails Advocate

Diane Connolly, M31597, NE Region, Ride Manager

Crockett Dumas, 748, MT Region, Former Director (22 years)/AERC President, Started  
Trails Committee (1983), HOF Person

Steve Downs, M38411, PS Region

Randy Eiland, 39, SW Region, Former Director/AERC President, Former Chair RM,  
Sponsorship, Rules and Sanctioning Committees

Denny Emerson, M19095, SE Region

Dawn Engle-Hilliard, M36420, NE Region, Ride Volunteer

Ruth Ferland, M33457, NE Region, Ride Manager, NH Trails Advocate

Kerry Greear, M33578, MT Region, Former Ride Manager, Former Co-Chair Education  
Committee, AERC Education Committee

Susan Garlinghouse, DVM, 6747, W Region, Vet Committee, Former DAL and  
Education Committee Chair, Volunteer Service Award

Becky Glaser, 6542, W Region, Former USEF Selector, Former Junior Committee

Lynne Glazer, 14580, PS Region, Former Ride Manager, Clinic Organizer

Claire Godwin, DVM, 9671, NE Ride Manager

Laura Hayes, 2741, MT Region, Former Director/VP, Former Chair Welfare of the Horse Committee, Ride Manager

Bri Henderson, DVM, M30691, NE Region, Veterinarian

Elisabet Hiatt, 5022, W Region, Ride Manager

Dean Hilliard, M37752, NE Region, Ride Volunteer

Blaine Jack, M36339, NE Region, Ride Manager

Pamela Karner, M33003, NE Region, Ride Manager, Veterinarian, FEI PTV

Jamie Kerr, DVM, 7841, W Region, Veterinarian, Former FEI Veterinarian, Former Vet Committee

Jan Mutchler, 17308, SW Region, Ride Manager

Lani Newcomb, 658, NE Region, Veterinarian, Old Dominion BoD, Ride Manager

Tom Noll, M30552, NW Region, Former Director

Lori Oleson, 1418, W Region, Ride Manager

Taylor Pashong-Walck, M22483, SW Region, Ride/Asst Manager

Pam Peace, 5822, W Region, Ride Manager

Patti Pizzo, 9968, NE Region, Former Director, Ride Manager

Jennifer Poling, M32258, NE Region, Decade Ride Manager, Former AERC-I Zone Rep, WV Trails Advocate

Naomi Preston, 4096, Former P&G Committee, Owner: HOF Horse

Carla Richardson, M34774, MT Region, Former Director, Welfare of the Horse Committee

SUSAN SCHOMBURG, 6505, MT Region, Former Director (10+ years), RM Committee, Ride Manager (28 years), MRER President

Cindy Simcox, 9144, MT Region, Ride Manager

Patti Stedman, M20888, NE Region, Former BoD and Chair of Ride Managers & Education Committees

Roger Taylor, 1496, SW Region, Former Director/Treasurer, HOF Person, Ride Manager

Kevin Waters, 6784, MT Region, Committee Member, Former Director

Bruce Weary, DC, 4160, SW Region, Former Director, Member of Welfare of the Horse, Education, P&G and Veterinary Committees

Barbara White, 2446, W Region, Committee Member