

Communication from Public

Name: Shadow Hills Neighbor

Date Submitted: 06/07/2026 10:52 AM

Council File No: 20-1575

Comments for Public Posting: Are rodeos really animal abuse? According to Mount Marty University in South Dakota, it is not. I have attached a piece written by Carlee Ready, an accomplished equestrian and veterinary student. Here is a synopsis of her piece which was published in December 2025: "Rodeo is a sport rooted in the traditions of 19th-century Mexican vaqueros who competed to demonstrate their ranching skills. Today, organizations such as the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) regulate the sport and enforce rules designed to protect both human and animal participants. Supporters argue that rodeo is not animal abuse because strict guidelines govern equipment and animal handling. The American Veterinary Medical Association recognizes PRCA animal welfare standards, and owners have a strong incentive to keep animals healthy because well-cared-for animals perform better. Equipment such as blunt spurs, flank straps, and specialized ropes is designed to encourage performance without causing injury. Rodeo rules also prohibit practices that could harm animals during roping events. Overall, proponents maintain that rodeo emphasizes animal welfare, responsible care, and safety rather than abuse." So, banning the implements and practices in the original motion in effect bans rodeos in their entirety in the City of Los Angeles. The amended ordinance then outright bans the activities that are included in traditional rodeos. I support rodeos, as long as they are humane (which our local rodeos are since they abide by the PRCA rules and guidelines). They preserve our western heritage, strengthen our local economy, provide revenue to the City via permits, fees, utility, sales and business taxes, and bring communities together. These events are conducted under animal welfare rules, veterinary supervision, and strict oversight. Rodeos educate the public about agriculture and provide valuable opportunities for young people involved in livestock and horsemanship programs. If our goal is responsible animal care, the answer is not to eliminate well-run rodeos but to support strong standards and enforce them. Los Angeles is one of the few cities in Southern California where the equestrian lifestyle remains alive and thriving, and we deeply value this unique way of life within a city of millions. Our equestrian heritage supports local businesses, creates jobs, attracts visitors, and brings communities together through events such as

rodeos. If this ordinance is passed and rodeos are effectively eliminated, our communities will lose an important part of their identity and character—something that cannot be replaced once it is gone. The choice should not be between animal welfare and preserving tradition. We can and should do both. By enforcing strong animal welfare standards while allowing responsible rodeo events to continue, Los Angeles can protect animals and preserve a cherished cultural tradition that has been part of our communities for generations. I therefore oppose this motion in its current form.

Rodeo Is Not Animal Abuse

December 9, 2025

Carlee Ready

Rodeo is a tough and rugged sport. Regardless of how tough the sport may be on all, it certainly is not animal abuse. Today I will explore the cultural significance of rodeo, the strict regulations that are applied in rodeo, and how rodeo outright does not harm the animals.

The origins of rodeo began in Mexico during the 1800s; vaqueros (ranch hands) were perfecting their roping, and riding skills (La Tray). Between cattle drives, this focus to achieve perfection led them to gather and compete with one another. Eventually, these small gatherings of vaqueros grew into larger and larger groups wanting to show off their skills and prove that they were better than others. This growth perpetrated with becoming widespread, large-scale events. In 1975, the PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association) was formed (La Tray). This organization has a wide reach that continues outside the United States. The PRCA is the key governing body that applies and creates the regulations (plus rules) that are followed within its sanctioned rodeos.

With having a large association governing rodeos, there can be some speculation that the guidelines are not thorough enough or create loopholes for certain regulations with keeping the animal competitors and human competitors, plus the pickup crew, safe—this is not the case. According to Terri Greer, a member of the PRCA from 1995, “PRCA rules so successfully protect animals that the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recognizes PRCA guidelines in its position statement on the welfare of animals in spectator events” (Greer). As much as it can be said verbally that these animals are safe, having the American Veterinary Medical Association at the head of keeping the animals safe goes to show the strength of these guidelines in rodeo. On top of this, the healthier the animals are, the better performance they produce—and the more the human competitors are able to showcase their skills and have a better chance of winning the event. These stock ranchers – plus the people who personally own their roping horses (even including barrel horses) – take great care in their animals. Animal husbandry has always been at the forefront of ranching, and this value has been continued into current times instead of staying in the past when dealing with the sport of rodeo.

Regardless of the fact rodeo is based with animal husbandry in mind, many people will say rodeo activities harm the animals—between the spurs, the flank straps for rough stock, and the ropes for the roping calves, steers in steer wrestling, or the steers for breakaway roping. None of this equipment is meant to harm the animals in any form.

“Sharp spurs that hurt horses exist, but they are illegal in rodeo. Rodeo rules only allow blunt spurs under penalty of expulsion” (Deelen & Paulina). The point of these blunt spurs, is to gently give the horse (or bull) a gentle nudge to make sure they realize the competitor is on their back. With the spurs being blunt – if they were to apply a fair amount of pressure, it does not hurt the animal compared to typical spurs. The flank straps also act similar to the blunt spurs used, except when utilized this way it is a teaching method for preparing the horse/bull to perform rather than standing around. “Trainers maintain that the strap consists of nothing but a strip of sheep skin and is pain-free, and through conditioning prepares the animal to perform” (Deelen & Paulina).

The strap placement is also key: it is in a spot where on the bull or horse, it is not on top of any genitals that may be present in the area (since both mares and geldings/stallions are used as rough stock for bronc riding events). On top of that, in roping events, the ropes are designed to be effective for roping, but soft enough to not dig and tear skin/fur as they tighten. Roping events also make sure that the calves/steers are not suddenly brought to a stop by the tightening of the rope, knocking them off their feet, or stopping too soon with a taut line – potentially flipping the cow. By limiting these three actions, the cattle within the roping divisions are left to continue to be roped under safe roping methods. In conclusion, rodeo does not abuse its animals – it ensures they are healthy and ready to compete. Between the strict rules, its history and equipment bylaws, abuse is the last thing to occur.

WORKS CITED

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Leonarda Deelen, Evelien Paulina. "From Outlaw to Athlete – Emic Perceptions on the Human – Horse Relationship in American Rodeo." Washington State University, May 2021.

La Tray, Chris. "A Brief History of the Rodeo." Smithsonian Magazine, July 2022, www.smithsonianmag.com/history/brief-history-rodeo-180980341/.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 06/07/2026 05:04 PM

Council File No: 20-1575

Comments for Public Posting: A full rodeo ban for Los Angeles County is necessary. It's time for this cruel excuse for entertainment to end.

Communication from Public

Name: Jack Horn

Date Submitted: 06/07/2026 10:08 AM

Council File No: 20-1575

Comments for Public Posting: Please look into how bucking stock (bucking horses and bulls) are taking care of; better than many personal pets. No point to stopping rodeos other than a few alarmists who want to make rules for the majority.

Communication from Public

Name: Marlene Goodman

Date Submitted: 06/07/2026 01:45 PM

Council File No: 20-1575

Comments for Public Posting: It is of major importance that the city council of Las Angeles ban rodeos forever. Rodeos harm both animals and riders alike. Please for for a rodeo ban. Marlene Goodman 13226 Moorpark St. Sherman Oaks, CA 91423 818-89-1924

Communication from Public

Name: Rev. Jaime Nieves, PGSS-C
Date Submitted: 06/07/2026 02:09 PM
Council File No: 20-1575
Comments for Public Posting: My name is Jaime and I am the grandchild of Mexican immigrants. It's well known that major rodeo leagues are sponsored by Border Patrol. If the Los Angeles City Council does not pass the proposed rodeo ban, you are welcoming ICE into LA to terrorize our community with masked agents. You are sending the message that Los Angeles supports the abuse, mistreatment, and terrorization of both immigrants and animals. I encourage this committee to agendize the Los Angeles Rodeo Ban as soon as possible.