First and foremost, Chicago’s Carriage Horse operators and the Horsemen’s Council of Illinois (HCI) agree that the best interests of the horses are of the utmost importance as well as preserving part of Chicago’s cultural heritage and their connection to agriculture. The carriage horses of Chicago are an iconic symbol of the city and reflects its cultural heritage. Seeing, touching and smelling these animals may be a key to connecting with and understanding agriculture. HCI also hopes this is the first of many future discussions we can have about the welfare of Illinois’ horses and horsemen.

Chicago carriage horses work 10-12 hour days:

A carriage horse may do ten rides, which is not even four hours of work per night. The Chicago city ordinance does not differentiate what is work and what is break time. This has been left to the carriage industry under the watchful eye of Chicago’s Animal Care and Controls. Over the year’s this has been talked over with numerous Commissioner’s and has been agreed upon, but with each change in leadership this understanding has been lost.

BACP does not monitor carriage horses.

BACP is complaint driven. If the carriage industry was so blatantly breaking serious and dangerous rules, where are the accidents, where are the multitudes of people complaining about us? None, because there are no complaints.

That does not mean that they do not monitor us however. They come out and check for water containers and licenses, etc. In the past we have received citations. Citations that are being negotiated are basically “traffic tickets” such as the discrepancy of hours on weekends.

It’s taking too long to hear case

Carriage Operators have no intention of breaking the law. The CAA is not privileged nor should be to know what BACP has negotiated with the carriage companies on rules and ordinances that are long outdated. Outdated rules include no left-hand turn ordinance, prohibiting carriages to operate on streets that must be used in order to go to work and come home from work, typographical errors on the ordinance itself and requests by the hotel and restaurant industry to take care of their guests and customers.

There are people that do not like or understand the horse and carriage industry. We cannot help what people believe except to educate them. We have seen the CAA’s presentation first hand. But we can help dispel the untruths and educate the public about the horse for pleasure, show, racing and work as well as the horsemen and women that keep them. We appreciate you taking the time to meet with us and we hope this is the first of many meetings, so we can form a mutually beneficial relationship.