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Comment from Anonymous

Posted by the **Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service** on Mar 17, 2026

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As a future veterinary student, entering veterinary school in the fall, and someone who has been involved in the equine industry for most of my life, it is important to me that policies related to monitoring and control of equine diseases continue to be upheld. Continued information collection of EIA plays an essential role in tracking positive cases, controlling interstate movement of infected horses, and maintaining effective disease surveillance. EIA is a viral disease that is often fatal due to no current treatment or vaccine, which results in prevention and monitoring remaining as the most important tools for protecting the equine population. The outbreak of EIA associated with iatrogenic transmission in 2024-2025 further highlights the importance of consistent surveillance, accurate laboratory testing, and reliable reporting systems.

Routine testing through a Coggins test is a necessary safeguard for the industry, since it is required for sale, interstate transport, and exhibition of horses, with many breed associations and competitive events requiring a negative test result within the past year. These requirements are important due to these events bringing together horses from different states and facilities, creating an easily transmissible environment and being the sole preventative measure for this disease. Because these tests play such a crucial role, it is essential laboratories performing official EIA tests are properly approved and the data they report is accurate and reliable.

While the collection and reporting of this information inevitably creates some administrative burden, the benefits of maintaining a strong disease surveillance system far outweigh these costs and support APHIS' mission of protecting animal health. However, the burden estimates associated with reporting should also be carefully evaluated. The notice estimates an average reporting burden of approximately 0.080 hours, or about five minutes, per response. Streamlining this process through standardized electronic submissions, integration across platforms, and clearer digital reporting forms may improve efficiency and accuracy of the data.

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Taking all of this into consideration, I am strongly in favor of the continuation of the collection of this data for the next 3 years to maintain the health of the equine population.

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