

Good Afternoon Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and distinguished members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, my name is Mike Cushing. I am a lifelong resident of Franklin County, third generation Maine horsemen and the current president of the Maine Harness Horsemen's Association.

I came here today to testify in support of LD 1992, a bill to allow the legalization of Historical Horse Racing and Electronic Beano at licensed Maine gaming facilities and Federally Recognized Indian Tribes.

Without question, Historical Horse Racing Machines have tremendous potential to be an economic windfall for State Of Maine's general fund. But looking at through the lens of a Maine horsemen, Historical Horse Racing machines, would provide a positive impact on our industry. LD 1992 would contribute much needed funding for all industry partners, such as purses for our competing horse owners, Sires Stakes, agricultural fairs support, OTBs, Maine's two commercial tracks, and our two casinos. But equally as important, HHR's would bring the sport of horse racing into several new locations, exposing our great sport to a new clientele.

Historical Horse Racing machines have been operational in a handful of U.S. states with a great deal of success. In a couple states HHR's have been credited with reviving struggling racetracks and securing the surrounding rural agricultural communities. In March of 2023, in an on-line publication ,US Bets, Mike Seely wrote 'HHR has become such a stealth force that it can be at least partially credited for the construction of a new racetrack in Kentucky, and the sport's very salvation in Arkansas, the state in which it all began".

I urge that you all will consider casting a vote of ought-to-pass on this legislation. The Maine Harness Horsemen's Association stands eager to work with this committee and all interested parties involved in LD 1992.

Thank You for affording us the opportunity to speak.

Michael Cushing, President
Maine Harness Horsemen's Association