

Support the Amendment to “An Act to Support Nonprofit Organizations by Authorizing the Operation of Electronic Lucky Seven Devices and Similar Sealed Ticket Games.”

Good Morning Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, my name is Don Barberino. I operate the Off-Track Betting facilities in Waterville and Sanford and I support the Amendment to LD 1902.

The amendment would permit the Maine Harness Racing industry to operate Historical Horse Racing (HHR), which will help the industry compete, especially now that iGaming has been passed into law.

HHR is a defensive tool. It will provide a revenue stream dedicated to racing, enhancing purses, breeder's incentives and the agricultural fairs. It will help bring people into our facilities, where we employ people, pay local taxes, and spend money in our communities, a real economic generator. Without HHR, racing bears the downside of iGaming without any offsetting benefit.

This amendment will recognize and mitigate predictable economic consequences to an already fragile racing industry.

iGaming changes the Marketplace

iGaming introduces a 24-hour, mobile, casino-style product that competes for the same discretionary dollars as racing.

Adding new gaming, especially one that will be on everyone's phone, and will be heavily promoted, will damage the Maine Harness Racing industry. Our industry needs a parallel modernization tool, such as Historical Horse Racing, to offset the harm created by iGaming.

This is not about creating winners and losers. It is about preserving balance in a rapidly changing gaming environment.

Historical horse racing has proven to be the single most effective tool nationwide for preserving live racing, stabilizing purses, retaining horses and agricultural jobs and allowing racing to compete responsibly in a modern gaming environment.