

Testimony of
Michael Cianchette of Cumberland
First Tracks Investments, LLC
in support of
LD 1611

Senator Dill, Representative O’Neil, and members of the Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry Committee, my name is Michael Cianchette, I reside in Cumberland, and submit this written testimony today in support of LD 1611.

Since I will be testifying in person, this written statement will be brief. By way of background, First Tracks Investments, LLC is the new licensee conducting harness racing from the Cumberland Fairgrounds following the closure of Scarborough Downs as a racing facility. Our objective is to bring a new, modern harness racing facility to market as part of a larger entertainment project. We hope to have more to share soon on this front.

In the interim, as the Committee knows, Commercial Harness Racing Tracks licensed under Title 8, Chapter 11 are permitted to conduct “simulcasting” under 8 M.R.S. §275-B(1). Unless an entity also has a licensed slot machine facility, such as Hollywood Casino in Bangor, current law requires the licensee to conduct simulcasting on the premises of the track itself. This bill would simply offer First Tracks some flexibility in its simulcasting efforts during this transition period. It does not create any new license or change what type of wagering may be offered.

We understand some of the existing OTBs may have some concerns with this proposal, and would consider it a friendly amendment to “sunset” the statutory language by limiting any temporary authorization until such time as a new facility comes to market or should the Commission find that its continued existence is no longer appropriate.

However, as everyone in Maine knows well, the costs of operating a track are substantial, the costs of construction are increasing, and the opportunity to generate additional revenues in support of the next era of harness racing in Maine will help put our efforts on the strongest possible footing moving forward.

To give a sense of what “forward” looks like, attached to this testimony is a map of the locations that will receive Cumberland’s simulcast signal beginning this Saturday (May 8) and be available for wagering. By the work session, I expect I will have an updated map to share showing further growth. Maine’s horses – and its agricultural heritage – will be on display for the world to see, and LD 1611 will help continue to move us in that direction as we work to build a facility that will be a showcase for years to come.

Thank you for your time, your service to our state, and your consideration. I will be happy to answer any questions that the committee may have.



First Tracks Cumberland GLOBAL LOCATIONS

NORTH AMERICA:

- Maine: All locations
- New Hampshire
- Connecticut: All locations
- New York: All OTB's
- New Jersey: two locations
- Pennsylvania: multiple
- Illinois: multiple
- Texas : multiple
- California: multiple
- Kentucky: multiple
- Oregon: multiple
- Idaho
- North Dakota
- Minnesota

CANADA: All provinces

EUROPE:

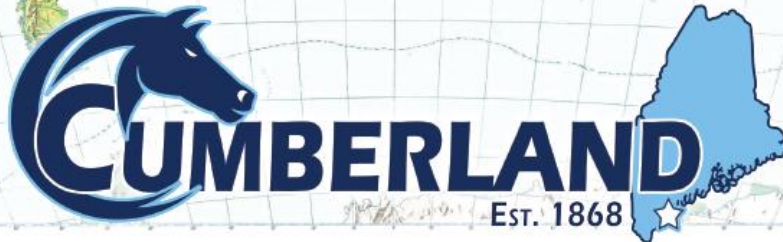
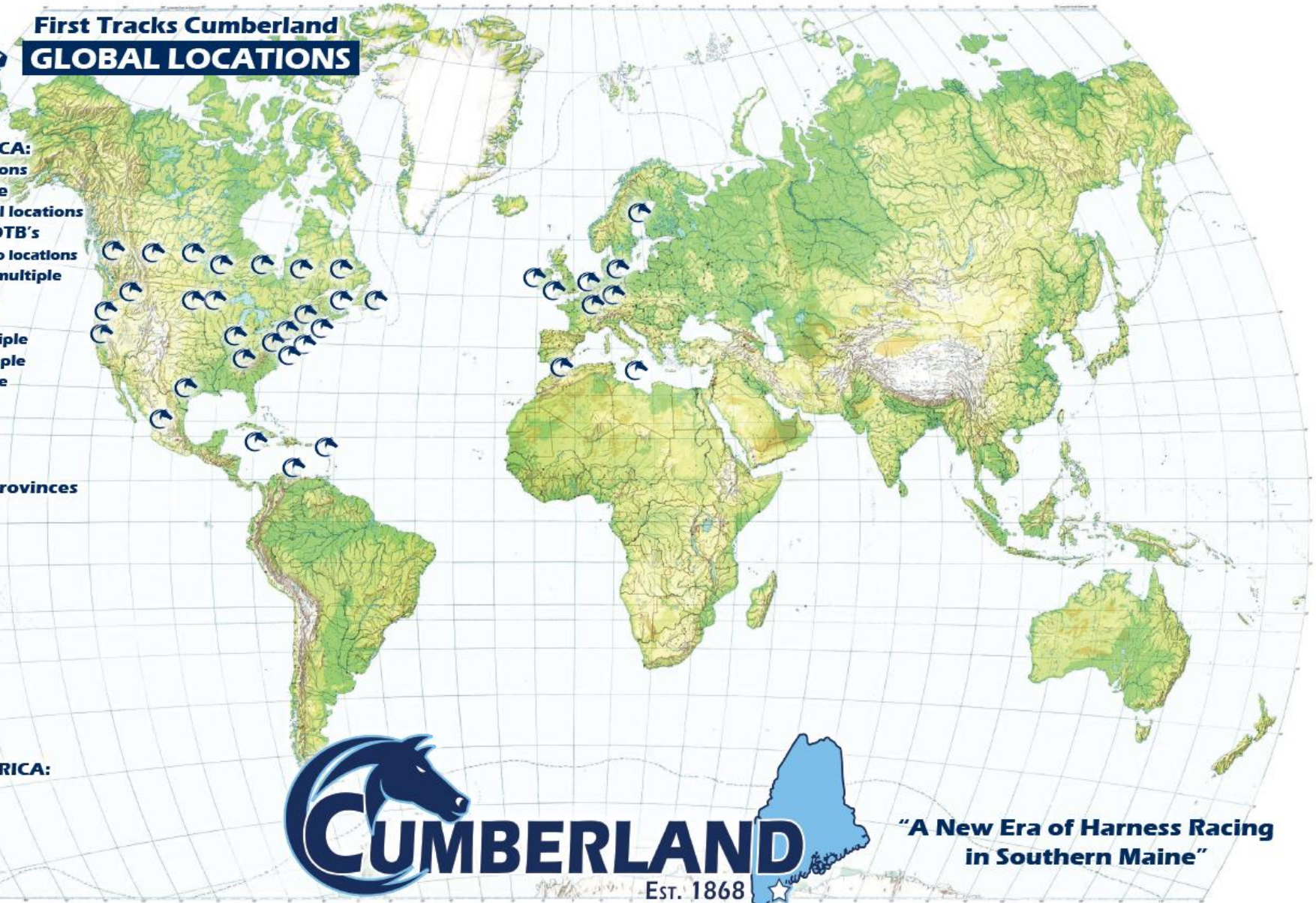
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Belgium
- Sweden
- Denmark
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Malta
- Gibraltar

CENTRAL AMERICA:

- Mexico

CARIBBEAN:

- Curaçao
- St Kitts
- Jamaica



**"A New Era of Harness Racing
in Southern Maine"**