



CITY OF PORTLAND

To: Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry
From: Kate Snyder, Mayor
Date: May 13, 2021
RE: OPPOSITION TO LD 1611 - AMENDMENT REQUESTED

The Legislative Committee of the Portland City Council opposes LD 1611 as written, and requests that the Committee amend the bill to clarify that licensing of any off-track betting facility in Portland will require approval by the City of Portland itself. As the only municipality implicated in this bill, we respectfully offer our concerns not of the off-track betting facility itself but the process by which that facility is licensed and overseen.

The bill as drafted allows only the Maine Harness Racing Commission to license off-track betting facilities in Portland, and creates potential confusion about the role the City of Portland has on oversight and approval of such a facility. For obvious reasons, including public health and safety, Portland believes it is best positioned to both license and oversee the operation of such a facility in its municipal boundaries. We are concerned about any bill that implies it preempts a municipality's local authority to review and approve or deny licenses.

Please amend the bill to clarify that Portland maintains preemptive authority and that local approval be a necessary condition of operating in the municipality.

Thank you for your time and consideration.