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TESTIMONY BEFORE THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
VETERANS AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

Neither For Nor Against LD 1405

*An Act To Regulate, Tax and Control Sports Wagering*

April 30, 2021

Senator Luchini, Representative Caiazzo, members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs, my name is Henry Jennings, and I am the Executive Director for the Maine State Harness Racing Commission, speaking neither for nor against LD 1405, *An Act To Regulate, Tax and Control Sports Wagering*. My testimony today is specific to the impacts on Maine's harness racing.

In Maine, sports wagering competes directly with harness racing for a finite pool of discretionary income that Mainers allocate to gaming options. Large, out-of-state corporations will likely benefit the most at the expense of small, historical Maine-owned businesses. Under the competing bills, the Maine harness racing industry and Maine's 26 agricultural fairs will suffer economic harm due to the advent of sports wagering. LD 1405 is the only sports wagering bill that recognizes the inevitable harm and attempts to partially mitigate the losses by directing very small percentages of the State revenues to these agricultural enterprises.

Historically, as new gaming options have come online in Maine, the Legislature has enacted policies intended to allow the historical Maine-owned small businesses to coexist instead of being displaced altogether. LD 1405 continues that legacy and recognizes the value and contributions that both harness racing and the agricultural fairs bring to Maine's rural agricultural economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have now or at the work session.

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