



DAVID T. O'ROURKE
Chief Executive Officer and President

January 23, 2020

Rep. Jan Schakowsky, Chair
Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
2125 Rayburn HOB
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representatives Schakowsky and McMorris Rodgers,

Thank you for giving The New York Racing Association (NYRA) the opportunity to submit this letter of support for H.S. 1754, The Horseracing Integrity Act of 2019 (HIA), which was introduced by Congressmen Paul Tonko (D-NY) and Andy Barr (R-KY).

NYRA holds the exclusive franchise to conduct thoroughbred racing at Aqueduct Racetrack, Belmont Park and Saratoga Race Course. Our three tracks are the cornerstone of New York's thoroughbred industry, which is responsible for 19,000 jobs and more than \$3 billion in annual economic impact statewide.

Nothing is more important to NYRA than the health and safety of our equine and human athletes, which we believe is critical to ensuring the long-term integrity and fairness of our sport. For that reason, we strongly support passage of H.R. 1754, which will greatly enhance the safety of thoroughbred racing by setting the national standards for drug testing and enforcement that our sport desperately needs.

Unlike other professional sports, horse racing is not governed by a national body. Instead, 38 state and regional organizations across the country oversee a patchwork quilt of regulations that vary by jurisdiction. Different standards for drug testing and enforcement create a fragmented system of regulations that are not in the best interests of health and safety for equine and human athletes alike. Horses that are subjected to inconsistent medication rules while in competition face the risk of injury when medical plans change each time they race in a different state.

NYRA also believes a strong anti-doping system is a significant component of ensuring the integrity of the sport and better protecting our athletes. In New York, we have adopted the National Uniform Medication Program (NUMP), which was developed by the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium. However, not all racing jurisdictions have adopted every part of the NUMP.

The Horseracing Integrity Act will create a private, national and independent horse racing anti-doping authority - the Horseracing Anti-Doping and Medication Control Authority (HADA). The authority would be under the governance of the United States Anti-Doping Agency, which is responsible for

drug regulation of America's Olympic and Paralympic athletes. The HADA will create a set of uniform anti-doping rules, including lists of permitted and prohibited substances and methods, and also take into consideration international anti-doping standards and veterinarian ethical standards.

H.R. 1754 has garnered widespread bipartisan support with 228 co-sponsors and 27 original co-sponsors, all of whom recognize that it is critical to helping protect racehorses and jockeys. The legislation would bolster safety efforts already underway in our industry.

NYRA, for instance, is accredited by the National Thoroughbred Racing Association's Safety and Integrity Alliance. We are also a founding member of the Thoroughbred Safety Coalition (TSC) - a collective of the nation's leading racing organizations working collaboratively to advance safety measures across the sport while increasing accountability and transparency.

In short, we believe that the passage of H.R. 1754 is vital to equine health and the integrity of our sport, as well as the many industries it supports. We urge that all racing jurisdictions join NYRA and other major tracks in supporting this legislation.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. O'Rourke", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dave O'Rourke