

**Statement by
William W. Thomason, Jr.
President and Chief Executive Officer, Keeneland Association, Inc.
House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection
HR 1754 Horseracing Integrity Act
Tuesday, January 28, 2020**

Keeneland was established in 1935 in the heart of America's most significant Thoroughbred breeding region, and today owns and operates one of the country's iconic racetracks and the world's largest Thoroughbred auction house.

From the beginning, Keeneland's mission was "to create a model race track to perpetuate and improve the sport and to provide a course that is intended to serve as a symbol of the fine traditions in Thoroughbred racing." Inextricably bound to that mission throughout our history have been unwavering commitments to the health and safety of our equine and human athletes and to the protection and enhancement of the American Thoroughbred such that it remains respected and in demand around the world.

True to that mission and those commitments, Keeneland has always presented outstanding Thoroughbred racing. Horses that have run at Keeneland include household names like Bull Lea, Tim Tam, Riva Ridge, John Henry, Holy Bull, Northern Dancer, Forward Pass, Forego, Unbridled, Round Table, Arts and Letters, Honest Pleasure, Alydar, Rachel Alexandra and Spectacular Bid. Twenty-three horses that ran in Keeneland's premier Kentucky Derby prep race, the Blue Grass Stakes, were first in the Kentucky Derby; 13 won the Preakness; 16 won the Belmont; 9 of those horses won two legs of the Triple Crown; and one, Whirlaway, won the Triple Crown. American Pharoah completed the first "Grand Slam" in American Thoroughbred racing by topping off his Triple Crown victory with a win in the Breeders' Cup Classic at Keeneland on October 31, 2015.

Keeneland is the world leader in Thoroughbred auction sales. In 2019, Keeneland sold 6,667 Thoroughbreds for \$627 million. Buyers came not just from the United States, but also from more than 45 countries, representing an enormous investment of foreign dollars into our American equine products. Horses sold at auction at Keeneland have gone on to achieve enormous success at the racetrack and in the breeding shed. Twenty-two future Kentucky Derby winners, 25 Preakness winners, 21 Belmont Stakes winners and 119 Breeders' Cup race winners, including 13 winners of the Breeders' Cup Classic, are graduates of Keeneland auctions. In 2016, all three winners of the Triple Crown races, Nyquist, Exaggerator and Creator, sold at Keeneland auctions, and later that year at the Keeneland September Yearling Sale, a horse named Justify sold for \$500,000. As we now know, he became the 13th winner of the Triple Crown, completing that feat at the 2018 Belmont Stakes. This past year, Keeneland sales graduate Vino Rosso won the Breeders' Cup Classic and became a champion. Another Keeneland sales graduate, Bricks and Mortar, was named 2019 Horse of the Year.

HR 1754 addresses issues critical to the success and growth of racing, breeding, and sales in our great sport. By creating a robust anti-doping program, the independent authority created by this legislation will provide both uniformity and appropriate rigor to better ensure clean competition in American racing. Along with many in the industry, we support an expansion of the

legislation to include safety, welfare and performance standards that will protect horses and riders and increase public trust in the integrity and welfare of Thoroughbred racing.

The beneficiaries will include our fans who can enjoy races with confidence they are free from improper influences, participants who can compete knowing they are on an even playing field, and deserve to do so without the burden of anything in their systems that could harm them, and the jockeys who can ride the races with confidence their horses are sound and ready to compete.

We especially commend our own Congressman Andy Barr for his leadership in this important initiative and we urge the passage of HR 1754 at the earliest opportunity.