

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky, Chairwoman
The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2020

Dear Chairwoman Schakowsky and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers,

As a member of the Water Hay Oats Alliance (WHOA) as well as the former president of the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) and the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association, steward of The Jockey Club, trustee of the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association and Breeders' Cup, and currently as a director of the Keeneland Association and as vice chairman of the Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation, I want to lend my strong support to H.R. 1754, the Horseracing Integrity Act.

WHOA supports the passage of federal legislation to prohibit the use of performance-enhancing drugs in the sport of horse racing. WHOA members firmly believe that the appointment of an independent anti-doping program run by the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) will resolve the problem of widespread drug use in American racing and put U.S. racing jurisdictions in step with international standards.

The fragmented horse industry has witnessed a steady and ongoing decline for more than a few years with one strong reason being lack of uniformity among 38 independent entities regulating rules of racing and medication. The beginning of my practice of veterinary medicine in 1962 preceded the introduction of lasix, butazolidin, cortisone, and so many synthetics.

Unfortunately, the rules of racing did not consider these new developments.....only stimulants and depressants were banned. Therefore the new products were offered without consideration of the long-term effects. Certainly blaming all of racings problems on medication alone is unfair, but it is a major factor in our failure to unite under a single authority setting the regulations we desperately need.

Today, the United States is the **ONLY** major racing nation that allows race day medication! It is shown every single day around the world that race day medication is **NOT NECESSARY!** Actually, in the short and long term, race day medication results in limiting the careers of many equine athletes.

It is time for the Association of Equine Practitioners to support this important legislation. Horse racing is long overdue for implementing a centralized anti-doping governing body. After years of discussion among the members on the many boards I have been honored to sit on, little progress has been made, while doping has continued to destroy public confidence in racing. It is clearly time for the national oversight the Horseracing Integrity Act provides.

United we stand, divide we fall.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Gary Lavin" with a small "vml" or similar mark below the name.

Dr. A. Gary Lavin
The Water Hay Oats Alliance, Supporting Member
The Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation, Vice Chairman
The Keeneland Association, Director
The American Association of Equine Practitioners, Past President
The Kentucky Thoroughbred Association, Past President
The Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association, Former Trustee
The Jockey Club, Former Steward
The Breeders' Cup, Former Trustee

cc:

Congressman Larry Bucshon, Congressman Michael C. Burgess, Congressman Tony Cardenas, Congressman Earl L. "Buddy" Carter, Congresswoman Kathy Castor, Congresswoman Debbie Dingell, Congressman Greg Giantforte, Congressman Brett Guthrie, Congressman Richard Hudson, Congresswoman Robin L. Kelly, Congressman Robert E. Latta, Congressman Ben Ray Lujan, Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui, Congressman Jerry McNerney, Congressman Tom O'Halleran, Congressman Frank Pallone, Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester, Congressman Bobby Rush, Congressman Darren Soto, Congressman Fred Upton, Congressman Marc A. Veasey, Congressman Greg Walden