

March 23, 2010

Dear Representative:

I'm a stakeholder who is economically dependent on the success of the Thoroughbred industry in New York State.

I am extremely concerned about the continuing delays to install video lottery terminals (VLTs) at Aqueduct Race Track. This legacy of failed decision making is costing New York State \$1 million a day, forcing taxpayers to pick up the difference in funding state programs. Tragically, this nine-year delay has cost \$2.5 billion in revenue to New York State, all at a time when our deficit and unemployment rate are growing.

The Thoroughbred industry is an economic engine for the State of New York in terms of revenue and employment, with over 400 farms occupying 43,000 acres of green space, while contributing some \$2.4 billion dollars to the state's GDP. The industry employs over 35,000 citizens across fifty different counties in New York. The ripple effect from the state's Thoroughbred industry is impressive and many other businesses have become dependent upon the annual racing and breeding season. This cascading effect touches property values, tourism, retail, hospitality, restaurants as well as general products and services. Furthermore, the State and local government collect over \$120 million in excise taxes per year thanks to the activities of the Thoroughbred industry.

Despite this all, the Thoroughbred industry is at risk of exile because of the lack of decision making and expeditious action by State Government. In addition to being in default on VLT revenue at Aqueduct, State owned New York City Off-Track-Betting Corporation (NYCOTB), continues in bankruptcy owing millions of dollars to the industry. State Government has yet to reorganize NYCOTB to be a streamlined, non-competitive, reputable business for the Thoroughbred industry and state and local government.

At the same time our State is failing the Thoroughbred industry and citizens of New York, our surrounding states and government are supporting the industry's future. Pennsylvania now has a breeding program 36% larger than New York, due to VLT revenue. New Jersey will now have racing at Monmouth Park, supplying \$1 million dollars a day in purse money for the industry. Furthermore, Canada, through VLT revenue now offers double the purses and breeding incentives than New York. Because of these competitive pressures, lucrative incentives and higher purses, farms, breeders, owners and horsemen are departing to other states who have acted in support of the Thoroughbred industry.

Due to the significant financial crisis of the state, the critical need for education funding, and the enhanced support of the Thoroughbred industry in New York, I ask that the Governor and legislature make the selection of an operator for VLTs at Aqueduct a priority and allow for expedited review, decision and execution of an agreement.

New York doesn't need to lose any more money or business and New Yorkers' deserve what was intended for them in 2001. Please make Aqueduct VLTs a priority.

Sincerely,