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Dear Representative:

As a New York horse breeder, I am paying close attention to the ongoing casino debate in New York State. The thoroughbred breeding industry waited over a decade for VLTs to be operational at Aqueduct and survived down economic times to finally realize the significant economic gains that have taken place since Resorts World opened in October 2011.

These clear and positive economic gains for the industry have come as no surprise to the horsemen, breeders, farmers and tens of thousands of others who are dependent on racing for their livelihoods. For example, in addition to providing much needed revenue for education, VLT revenue generated at Aqueduct has led to higher purses and have attracted the best horses in the country to not only race in New York but more importantly be bred here, raising not only the profile of the state's racing industry but that too of it's once thriving agricultural industry.

Thus as a breeder, I am deeply concerned about how the proposed constitutional amendment authorizing casino gaming will play out and what impact it may have on these critically important VLT-generated benefits.

Through the NYS Thoroughbred Breeding & Development Fund, New York's Thoroughbred breeders are a significant economic driver and job creator in Upstate New York, with the equine industry representing billions in economic impact each year to the state.

That is why, Breeders stand ready to work with others in the industry as well as Government to fully realize the opportunity and benefits that full scale casino gaming represents to expand the health of the racing and agricultural sectors of New York.

New York's revitalized horse racing industry is on the right track. New York showcases the very best the sport has to offer, while providing tens of thousands of jobs to New Yorkers, and pumping millions upon millions of dollars into the state's economy.

Therefore, it is my hope that New York State makes the right economic choice and the necessary steps to protect our racing and agricultural industries by ensuring these industries are rightfully enhanced and part of any casino enabling legislation.

Please ensure our industry remains a part of the conversation and solution as casino gaming moves forward in our great state.

Sincerely,