



Indiana Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association



Belinda Stronach Writes to Congress in Support of the Horseracing Integrity Act of 2017

NEWS RELEASE: July 11, 2018

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The Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity notes the attached (also below) letter from Belinda Stronach, the president and chairman of The Stronach Group, in support of H.R. 2651, the Horseracing Integrity Act of 2017. Frank Stronach, founder and honorary chairman of The Stronach Group, previously expressed his support for the legislation in April 2017.

H.R. 2651 would require that a uniform anti-doping and medication control program be developed and enforced by a private, non-profit, self-regulatory organization known as the Horseracing Anti-Doping and Medication Control Authority.

On June 22, the subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection, part of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, conducted a hearing on the bill. The bill currently has 126 cosponsors in the House of Representatives.

With the addition of The Stronach Group's support of H.R. 2651, track associations and organizations that support the bill now represent 59% of all pari-mutuel handle generated and 63% of all graded races run for Thoroughbreds in North America in 2017. This group includes Breeders' Cup Ltd., Indiana Grand, Keeneland Association, and the New York Racing Association.

"Frank and Belinda Stronach have been longtime advocates for uniformity and increased integrity in horse racing, and we thank them for their enthusiastic support of the Horseracing Integrity Act," said Shawn Smeallie, executive director of the Coalition for Horse Racing Integrity. "As evidenced by the bill's growing support among stakeholders in the racing industry and cosponsors in Congress, momentum is building to create a uniform and effective anti-doping program in horse racing in the United States."

CHRI members represent a diverse group of horse racing and animal welfare organizations: American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Arapahoe Park, Breeders' Cup Ltd., Centaur Gaming, the Consignors and Commercial Breeders Association, The Humane Society of the United States, the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association, the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities, The Jockey Club, the Jockey Club of Canada, Keeneland Association Inc., the Kentucky Thoroughbred Association and the Kentucky Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders, Meadowlands Racetrack, the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association, Tioga Downs, Vernon Downs, and the Water Hay Oats Alliance.

Read letter here:

June 20, 2018

The Honorable Bob Latta Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jan Schakowsky Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce United States House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Latta and Ranking Member Schakowsky:

Thank you for allowing The Stronach Group to share with you why we support the Horseracing Integrity Act of 2017, H.R. 2651.

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Belinda Stronach and I am the President and Chairman of The Stronach Group — a company that was founded in 2011 by my father Frank Stronach, who continues to serve as Honorary Chairman.

The Stronach Group is one of the largest owners and operators of Thoroughbred racetracks in The United States. Within our portfolio we hold some of the most recognized brands in the industry, including: Santa Anita Park, "The Great Race Place"; Pimlico Race Course, home of the legendary Preakness Stakes; Gulfstream Park, home of the Pegasus World Cup Invitational — the world's richest Thoroughbred horse race; Laurel Park; Golden Gate Fields; Portland Meadows; and Rosecroft Raceway.

It is well documented that The Stronach Group is a strong proponent for uniformity in Thoroughbred horse racing and that we support the abolishment of race-day medication.

While our efforts to eliminate the use of race-day medication started years before, in 2014 The Stronach Group issued a letter written by Frank Stronach to our fellow racetrack operators, urging them to come together to discontinue the practice of race-day medication. At that time, we also vowed support for the National Uniform Medication Program (NUMP) hoping that states would adopt and implement the reforms by September 1st, 2014.

As this committee is no doubt aware, to date these efforts have not come to fruition. Horses continue to race on medication administered only hours before they race. The United States is the only major racing jurisdiction in the world where this practice remains true.

NUMP still has not been adopted by all jurisdictions. Out of the four states in which we operate, Maryland is the only one to adopt NUMP but has yet to fully implement all of its components.

Our sport will benefit greatly from a level playing field, uniformity and federal oversight. Presently, there are 38 racing jurisdictions with different rules, regulations and penalties. These inefficiencies are both ineffective and costly and compromise the integrity of our sport.

The Stronach Group believes that this much needed reform can be achieved with the introduction of the Horseracing Integrity Act. We need bipartisan legislation that will establish a uniform set of rules, testing procedures, and penalties under the Horseracing Anti-Doping and Medication Control Authority (HADA). Uniformity and regulation exists for many other major sporting platforms, so why not ours?

The Stronach Group believes the sport of horse racing is the last great sporting legacy platform to be modernized. If we expect our sport to grow for future generations, we need to raise our standards. Efforts under HADA to establish oversight and to bring uniformity with the ultimate goal of the elimination of race-day medication will raise the integrity of our sport and, most importantly, will improve the safety of our athletes — both equine and human. It will not only help racing, it will invigorate the entire industry ecosystem from breeding to training and aftercare and will enable our sport to grow and compete on a global scale.

We strongly urge you to vote for the passage of the Horseracing Integrity Act. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Belinda Stronach Chairman and President