



50/50 Split of Sports Revenue Between Tracks and Horsemen's Purses Is Fundamentally Fair and Necessary for the Strength and Perseverance of Live Racing

Horsemen's Purses Drive the Illinois Racing Economy

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**Statement from Illinois Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association,
Illinois Harness Horsemen's Association and
Illinois Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association and
Illinois Thoroughbred Breeders and Owners Foundation**

Illinois racetracks are in consideration for a share of sports gaming handle *due solely to their relationship with racing*, which in turn exists for the purpose of promoting jobs both at the tracks and throughout Illinois agribusiness. But for their relationship to racing, tracks would not be in this mix.

Illinois horsemen breed, own, train and care for the equine athletes that make our sport and industry possible. We proudly embrace at least 50% of the responsibility for producing the racing product that is enjoyed by racing enthusiasts here in this state and across North America. We respectfully urge Illinois lawmakers to ensure that any sports betting handle directed to horse racing is apportioned evenly – a 50/50 split – between tracks and horsemen's purses.

Historically, tracks have collected far more than 50% of the revenue from racing handle relative to the share of revenue that is ultimately available to be paid in the form of horsemen's purses. After accounting for recapture, the mechanism by which tracks remove dollars from the horsemen's purse accounts to subsidize their own operations, a track's share of revenue from handle jumps from approximately 51% to a staggering 66%. Horsemen's purses – the economic driver of our industry – are left with just 34% of that revenue. In 2018 alone, Illinois tracks are poised to take \$11.1 million from thoroughbred and standardbred purses. Since 1996, tracks have through recapture taken more than \$284 million from horsemen's purses.

We appreciate that multiple gaming stakeholders are competing for sports gaming revenue. But to the degree that this revenue is intended to bolster live racing, thereby supporting jobs and advancing the interests of Illinois taxpayers, fair and even distribution to horsemen's purses is critical. It is *live racing*, through the continued investment and work of horsemen, that supports thousands of jobs across Illinois, from blacksmiths, backstretch workers, thoroughbred jockeys and standardbred drivers at the tracks to breeders, veterinarians and feed and hay suppliers downstate.

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