



January 23, 2026

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
120 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Support - House Bill 225 (Maryland Horse Industry Board - Sunset Extension)

Dear Chair Barnes and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association (MTHA), I write to express our strong support for HB 225, legislation to extend the sunset date for the Maryland Horse Industry Board from July 1, 2026 to July 1, 2036.

The Maryland Horse Industry Board plays a vital role in supporting and promoting Maryland's diverse and economically significant equine sector, which contributes billions of dollars annually to the State's economy, supports thousands of jobs, and strengthens rural communities statewide. By providing a stable institutional framework for industry-wide coordination, policy development, and advocacy, the Board helps sustain the health and competitiveness of Maryland's horse industry.

Extending the Board's statutory authority will allow this important entity to continue its work in fostering collaboration between industry stakeholders, State government, and local communities. It also ensures ongoing attention to critical areas such as workforce development, equine health and safety, agricultural education, and the protection of Maryland's agricultural and equestrian heritage.

MTHA has long supported the mission of the Horse Industry Board and views HB 225 as an important step to maintain continuity and strategic planning for the industry's future. The extension of the sunset date to 2036 will provide the Board with the certainty needed to undertake long-term initiatives that benefit Maryland's racing, breeding, and broader equine communities.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge this Committee's favorable report on HB 225.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katharine M. Voss
President, MTHA