

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a resident of Howard County Maryland, and I am writing in regards to HB 162/SB 452, of which I have significant concerns. This bill, while seemingly protective of individuals, would have devastating implications for equestrian sports.

Maryland is one of the country's leaders in horse sports, and as anyone who has participated in an equestrian activity in the state knows, liability waivers from recreational facilities are an integral part of participating in these activities. Horses are living creatures who often have strong opinions, and even the best trained, gentlest horse in the world can be dangerous at times. The foremost horse trainers in the world cannot guarantee that their horses will perform perfectly at all times, and as a result accidents sometimes happen. Limiting the circumstances under which recreational horseback riding facilities are protected against legal action will increase insurance costs and, potentially, open the door to spurious claims of negligence that will make running equestrian facilities in the state of Maryland prohibitively expensive. Horse riding stables where young Marylanders take their first lessons forming the beginnings of a lifelong relationship with equestrian sports are barely making ends meet as it is. I am very concerned that if HB 162/SB 452 passes that we will see many of these facilities forced to close their doors to lesson programs and the sport will become exclusively limited to the very wealthy.

Please reconsider the impact of this bill on the equestrian industry when deciding how to vote.

Sincerely,

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