



March 15, 2024

Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB 1524

Dear Chairman Atterbeary:

The Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association ("MTHA") is the long-time officially recognized organization which represents the interests of Maryland's Thoroughbred owners and trainers and the thousands of backstretch workers and support businesses that are the backbone of Maryland Thoroughbred racing. Together with the breeding industry, we are a billion-dollar contributor to the State's economy.

For more than a decade, the horsemen and breeders have collaborated with our track operator and the General Assembly to meet significant economic and competitive challenges to stabilize Maryland racing. We supported the creation of the Maryland Thoroughbred Racetrack Operating Authority and have worked closely with them. In our presentation to the Authority last fall, we urged them to consider the establishment of a state-of-the art training facility to compliment a reconstructed Pimlico that would serve as the year-round hub of Maryland racing. We further urged the Authority to strongly consider the creation of a not-for-profit entity to manage and operate racing in Maryland on a year-round basis as the best operating model for Maryland racing. We were pleased that the Authority agreed with and supported our recommendations. House Bill 1524 would make this vision a reality. It is a historic decision for the General Assembly and a seminal moment in the history of Maryland racing.

We thank you, Governor Moore, and Speaker Jones for supporting this vital legislation and commitment to Maryland racing. Lastly, we thank Authority Chair Greg Cross and the Authority members for their dedication and commitment to this effort.

We strongly urge a quick and favorable report for HB 1524.

Very truly yours,

Katharine M. Voss
President, MTHA