



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

SB 982 – Wagers on Historical Horse Races – Authorization

DATE: March 5th, 2025
COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation Committee
POSITION: Favorable
FROM: The Office of County Executive Jessica Fitzwater

As Frederick County Executive, I urge the committee to give **SB 982 – Wagers on Historical Horse Races – Authorization** a favorable report.

This bill will introduce historic horse racing machines as a sporting event for OTB (off track betting) facilities, such as at Long Shot's in Frederick County. This proposal represents a thoughtful and strategic approach to economic development that marries our county's heritage with innovation.

Preserving Frederick County's rich agricultural and rural heritage amid periods of growth and economic uncertainty presents challenges. Industries and businesses are facing similar financial challenges, and I believe this initiative is not only an economic opportunity for our community but also a meaningful step toward preserving our county's rich agricultural and equestrian heritage.

The introduction of these games could play a vital role in revitalizing the commercial area around the Frederick's Francis Scott Key Mall, which has been struggling to thrive in an increasingly competitive retail landscape. By introducing historic horse racing, we can attract more visitors, generate new jobs, and create a sustainable business environment that benefits not only the local economy but also the entire county.

Frederick County has long been a hub for Maryland's horse racing industry, which is deeply intertwined with our agricultural roots. This proposal builds off that tradition to leverage economic opportunity for our growing community.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 982. I urge you to advance this bill with a favorable report.

Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County, MD