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DELEGATION VICE CHAIR



THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
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February 20, 2026
The Honorable Jheanelle Wilkins and Jessica Feldmark
Ways & Means

RE: Support for HB1240/SB639 – Sports Wagering– Wagers on Historical Horse Races - Authorization

Dear Chair Wilkins and Vice Chair Feldmark,

We write to express our support for HB1240/SB639, which would authorize wagering on Historical Horse Races (HHR) in Maryland. This legislation is a critical step toward revitalizing the state's horse racing industry, preserving jobs, and supporting economic development, particularly in Frederick County.

Maryland has a long and storied tradition of horse racing, but our industry has steadily lost market share to neighboring states such as Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Delaware—many of which have already implemented HHR. With Maryland's racing calendar now reduced to just 120 days per year, the industry is struggling to sustain year-round operations. By permitting HHR as a pari-mutuel activity under the Maryland Racing Commission, if passed on a referendum this bill will provide much-needed financial stability to the industry.

For Frederick County, this legislation holds particular significance. The introduction of HHR will directly benefit local facilities such as Long Shot's in Frederick, allowing them to operate year-round, creating sustainable employment opportunities and boosting tourism. Additionally, HHR will generate revenue that supports Maryland horse breeders, farms, and the broader agricultural industry, helping to preserve green spaces and prevent further loss of farmland—an issue of particular concern in our county.

The success of HHR in other states, including Kentucky and Virginia, demonstrates the economic and industry benefits it can bring. By passing HB1240/SB639, Maryland can reclaim its competitive standing, protect its equine heritage, and ensure the viability of racing for future generations.

We appreciate your leadership and urge a favorable report on this important legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jesse T. Pippy.

Del. Jesse T. Pippy – Chair

Handwritten signature of William G. Folden.

Sen. William Folden – Vice Chair