



Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' and Owners' Association

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April 1, 2025

Chair Bradley and Members of the
Senate Committee on Regulated Industries,

Florida's rural communities have long been the backbone of our state, sustained by industries that have flourished for generations. Among them, the thoroughbred horse industry stands as a pillar of economic strength and agricultural tradition, supporting 33,500 jobs and contributing a staggering \$3.24 billion in total economic impact.

However, that legacy is now under threat. **SB 408 and HB 105** propose to decouple live racing from gaming operations, a move that would strip away critical investments in our multibillion-dollar industry and put thousands of Florida jobs at risk. The **Florida Thoroughbred Breeders' and Owners' Association** urges you to oppose these harmful proposals.

At its core, Thoroughbred racing reflects Florida's competitive edge, agricultural excellence, and leadership in fueling economic drivers while supporting an entire ecosystem of trainers, breeders, jockeys, veterinarians, and countless others who depend on its success. Decoupling would allow gaming operations to sever their ties to live racing, destabilizing the industry and jeopardizing a critical rural workforce.

Only one entity – Gulfstream Park racetrack's Canada-based parent company – is pushing for this legislation, standing to benefit from authorization to run stand-alone gaming facilities. The overwhelming opposition from both Florida and national entities, compared to such minimal support, makes one thing clear: Decoupling isn't a clarion call from the industry, it's a whisper from a single source.

The true scope of this effort became even clearer with the introduction of the PCS for HB 105, which proposed sweeping industry changes,

including shifting oversight of private sector operations to the Florida Gaming Commission – an expansion the commission itself warned could require additional personnel and investment to comply.

Meanwhile, states like Kentucky and New York are strengthening their racing industries through policies that attract investment, support breeders, and boost competition. SB 408 and HB 105 would contradict and derail Florida's wise industry investments over the last two years, putting us at risk of losing our talent and global reputation to states that offer a more supportive environment.

For many years, Florida-bred horses have contributed 40% of race entries, wins, and purse earnings statewide. Our premier events, like the FTBOA Florida Sire Stakes and the Florida Derby, don't just bring in revenue, they cement Florida as an epicenter for global racing. We cannot afford to lose our competitive edge to states with stronger policies.

Florida's breeding and racing industry has been a cornerstone of our state's success for generations, and with thoughtful policy, it will continue to thrive for generations to come. We respectfully ask that you stand with Florida's Thoroughbred and agricultural jobs in **opposing SB 408 and HB 105**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lonny Powell', with a stylized, flowing script.

Lonny Powell,
CEO and Executive Vice President