Decoupling: A Multibillion-Dollar Threat to Florida's World-Renowned Thoroughbred Legacy

Florida-bred Bentornato, 2025 Breeders' Cup Sprint (Grade 1) - ©Benoit

HB 881/SB 1564 will deal a devastating economic blow to the state by authorizing Thoroughbred pari-mutuel permit-holders to go back on a decades-long agreement and "decouple" from Thoroughbred horse races, allowing them to operate as stand-alone slot machine casinos and card rooms.

This decoupling of gaming from live horse racing **will eliminate the 33,500 jobs** supported by Florida's world-renowned Thoroughbred industry.

WHAT'S AT STAKE? A HUGE PRICE FOR FLORIDA

The Florida Thoroughbred industry contributes **$3.24 billion to the Florida economy**, representing a key rural economic driver for the state.

Florida is the third **leading equine state by population**, with **335,000 horses** — of which more than **1 in 4 (87,600)** are Thoroughbreds.

Wins define success, and **Florida Thoroughbreds reign supreme**. Florida is perennially the **top regional producer of national**:

Starters & Starts	Overall Wins	Open Stakes Wins	Graded Stakes Wins

The equine industry supports **112,000 jobs** in Florida, with **33,500 (30%)** linked to Thoroughbreds.

Individuals who do not own horses, joined with spectators, annually spend **$2.7 billion** on travel, dining, and lodging in Florida — more than one-third of it **(34%)** in Marion County.

Florida dedicates **561,000 acres** to equine and related activities

$4.3B

Marion County, known as the "Horse Capital of the World®," accounts for **210,000 acres** of this greenspace total. The county is home to **75,000 horses**, nearly **50% of them Thoroughbreds**, contributing **$4.3 billion** in total economic impact — **22% of the county's GDP**. Nearly three-quarters of U.S. juvenile race horses receive early training in Marion County, certifying Ocala as an epicenter of the global Thoroughbred industry.

Support Florida's Agriculture and Horse Industry. Oppose HB 881/SB 1564.

FTBOA
FLORIDA THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' AND OWNERS' ASSN.