

May 13, 2009

Mr. Gordon Medenica
Director, NYS Division of Lottery
P. O. Box 7500
Schenectady, NY 12301-7500

Dear Mr. Medenica:

I am writing this letter in my capacity as President and Administrative Director of the Western New York Harness Horsemen's Association. Our Association represents all of the Owners, Trainers, Drivers and Grooms who participate in the sport of Harness Racing at Buffalo Raceway and Batavia Downs in Western New York. The impetus for this letter comes from your comments made at a meeting of the New York State Senate Racing and Wagering Committee whereby you indicated that more money would be going to the state's education budget from video lottery terminals without racing.

Not only do I question the accuracy of your conclusion, but, it completely overlooks the fact that the racino program was created, in part, to be of assistance to the horse industry. While you state very clearly that you are focused on the lottery's mission of aid to education, certainly an admirable goal and one with which no one can disagree, you should not totally ignore the state's racing and agriculture industries. The racing industry provided tens of thousands of New York residents with full time employment, a number that has increased since the VLT initiative began. New life has been given to farms that might not have remained open otherwise, and vast amounts of land have continued to be devoted to agriculture.

At a time when racing in New York State has returned to its rightful spot as number one in the nation, it's very frustrating to have a man in your position completely overlook all the positive gains made in our Agri-Racing industry the past few years. Check out our breeding farms and see for yourself the millions of dollars of new investments made in construction, and the enormous investments our breeders have made in bringing outstanding new stallions and broodmares to our state. Visit our new multi-million dollar training centers. Travel to some of our racetracks and witness how hard our people work day after day. Dine in our refurbished clubhouses and see for yourself the great strides our industry has made in just a few short years. If you take the time to observe the racing related benefits generated in this great state, I believe you will no longer suggest turning your back on tens of thousands of hard working New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

Bruce Tubin
President and Administrative Director
Western New York Harness Horsemen's Association

cc: Chairman Eric Adams and members of the NYS Senate Racing & Wagering Committee
Chairman Gary Pretlow and members of the NYS Assembly Racing & Wagering Committee
Hon. Gill Magee, NYS Assembly Agriculture Committee
Hon. Darryl Aubertine, NYS Senate Agriculture Committee
Hon. John Sabini, Chairman, NYS Racing & Wagering Board
Hon. Patrick Hooker, Commissioner, NYS Division of Agriculture and Markets
Sylvia Hamer, Office of the Governor
Peter Gould, NY Sire Stakes
New York Farm Bureau

