



# ONTARIO HARNESS HORSE ASSOCIATION

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March 19, 2012

Ms. Sue Leslie  
President  
Ontario Horse Racing Industry Association  
555 Rexdale Blvd.  
PO Box 456  
Rexdale, ON M9W 5L1

Dear Sue,

Thank you, Sue, for today's letter advocating for a united response from the Standardbred Industry to address the government's plans for the OLG Slots-at-Racetracks Program. The necessity of working together on behalf of the racing industry in Ontario has never been clearer.

The tens of thousands of men and women who support their families through racing are in serious jeopardy, not to mention the potential loss of billions of dollars in spin-offs to the Ontario economy.

As the organization that represents the majority of the Standardbred Industry in Ontario we have reached out to our fellow representatives from the National Capital Region Harness Horse Association and the Northern Horsemen's Association who are also working hard on behalf of the Standardbred Industry. OHHA has also engaged with our national organization, Standardbred Canada.

We believe in operating in an open, transparent manner inclusive of all industry organizations. This is critical as it points to the necessity of a process that has integrity and, equally important, the trust of the horsepeople in Ontario.

The horsepeople do not know the position of OHRIA; we do not know what "mixed" messages you refer to in your letter. Nonetheless, OHHA is more than prepared to welcome representatives from OHRIA, from COSA, or any organization to work with us for the betterment of the racing industry in Ontario.

Yours truly,

Ken Hardy  
President

BT/ys

cc.: Bob Bodkin, NHA  
John Gallinger, SC  
Gordon McDonald, NCRHHA  
Bill O'Donnell, COSA

Ontario is blessed with a diverse horse racing and breeding industry. When we work together we are greater than the sum of all of our parts. During the challenging times we face together as a result of the Provincial government's plans for the OLG Slots at Racetracks Program, it is critical we are seen to be speaking with one voice.

Ontario's Horse Racing Industry Association was founded in the late 1990's to serve as the industry's voice to government in times of need for our members. We were heavily involved in winning the tax changes that were so necessary in the 1990's and played a significant role in developing the framework for what has become the OLG Slots at Racetrack Program.

Since the Government's first announcement of their intentions to review the Slots at Racetrack Program, OHRIA has engaged a public relations firm and government relations firm to provide professional assistance in protecting our industry.

Over the last two weeks it has become clear when speaking to Ministers and Opposition MPPs they need to hear clearly who is speaking for the industry, because the lack of consistency in message is presenting challenges for them in working with any of us.

If we do not correct this issue, none of us will be able to get anywhere with the government or opposition parties.

To that end, I am writing to formally ask your organization to publicly throw it's support behind OHRIA, and announce on your website or in a statement that OHRIA is the voice of Ontario's Horse Racing and Breeding Industry in the OLG Slots at Racetracks Program discussions with government and opposition parties.

It is critical we stand together now, because it is our only hope of turning this around before any further damage is done.

Sue Leslie  
OHRIA President and Chair