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TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION NO.337



AFFILIATED WITH THE
INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

2801 TRUMBULL AVE. , DETROIT, MI 48216

(313) 965-9833 • Fax: (313) 965-0570

www.teamsterslocal337.com

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July 9, 2021

The Honorable Gretchen Whitmer

P.O. Box 30013

Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Governor Whitmer,

On behalf of the Teamsters Local 337, I write to you today in support of Senate Bills 396-399, a bi-partisan package sponsored by Sen. Jim Ananich, Sen. Curtis Hertel, and Sen. Dan Lauwers.

As you know, the horse racing industry in Michigan has seen a major decline over the past several decades as other gaming entities including casinos and the state lottery have been allowed to modernize. The senate package of bills currently includes two different gaming options, Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs) and Historical Horse Racing Terminals (HHR), that would allow the horse racing industry to modernize, compete with neighboring states, and grow Michigan jobs.

Over the past 40 years Northville Downs has utilized the talents of hundreds of local Teamsters at their facility and the growth of competitive gaming options will mean more employment opportunities for Teamsters for decades to come. The passage of either VLTs or HHR would both stabilize the horse racing industry and lead to more jobs for our members at Northville Downs and other new tracks. These are middle class jobs, with paid time off, healthcare, and pension benefits.

Despite the arguments of the opposition, these bills do not violate the state constitution. Just as the lottery moved online in 2014 utilizing games authorized prior to January 1, 2004, the lottery could also utilize those same games at racetracks. Additionally, HHR uses pari-mutuel wagers on the result of old horse races and pari-mutuel wagering on the results of horse races has been allowed at licensed racetracks since the 1930s. Neither tool should be considered an expansion of gaming, instead both utilize existing legal wagers repackaged for a more modern gaming experience. Moreover, we believe that the Governor also has the ability to authorize both of these tools by administrative rule.

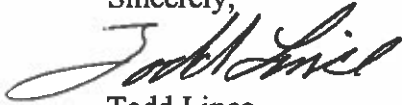
Either of these tools would generate much needed revenue for racetracks and certified horsemen's organizations who race live in Michigan as well as an estimated \$20-30 million in annual tax revenue per racetrack. That tax revenue could be used to support programs like MI Reconnect, the School Aid Fund, transportation needs, revenue sharing, or other priorities.



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We respectfully ask that you support this critical package of Senate bills that will provide more employment opportunities for our members for decades to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Lince". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Todd Lince
President

