

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am writing today in opposition of SB 2158.

It is very concerning to me to hear that the senate is attempting to remove the Director of Horse Racing in the State of North Dakota.

This would mean the end of horse racing in our state. The director is a very important position and requires someone with a working knowledge of the industry. The director must have direct, important daily contacts throughout the nation. Our current director has built the ND horse industry up substantially in his time, and if that position is cut, it would immediately go backwards and very shortly thereafter cease to exist all together.

The SD lawmakers have basically destroyed their live horse racing industry when they intervened with what were thriving meets in Aberdeen and Ft. Pierre. The economic impacts are being felt by both cities.

As horse breeders, in the industry for 45 years, our family purchases hay, grain, and supplies from local farmers and vendors. We keep our local veterinarians very happy as well.

The ramifications of losing this industry are more far reaching than you can imagine.

We have supported both the Belcourt and Fargo racetracks throughout the years. Last year during a nationwide pandemic, the average daily attendance was 1,000 spectators per day. These people are not just horse people they are your average Joe constituent, that loves coming out for a day of entertainment at the horse park. We have met with now Senator John Hoeven at the track and would love for more of our government servants to come out and see how enjoyable the sport of Kings can be in ND.

While it may seem like a trivial matter to those of you sitting in this room today, this is years of blood, sweat, tears and passion for many horse breeders, trainers, and owners in this state. You are deciding today if we will continue to carry on with the horse industry.