



March 11, 2021

**Attention: Ms. Iqra Khalid, Chair
Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights**

Subject: Single Event Sports Wagering – Private Members Bill C-218

Standardbred Canada is the national registry for the standardbred horse racing and breeding industry with a mandate to represent, promote and advance all standardbred horse interests.

Standardbred racing and breeding takes place from coast to coast in Canada and is a primary economic driver for the country's vibrant equine industry. There is an active standardbred industry in all ten of Canada's provinces, that makes a tremendous contribution as a vital agricultural production sector and a sports-recreation sector.

I am writing on behalf of the over 6,300 members of Standardbred Canada to express our concern over the Private Members Bill C-218 regarding Single Event Sports Wagering (SESW). The legalization of SESW wagering in Canada, if not executed properly, presents a serious threat to the sustainability of the entire horse racing industry.

The Canadian horse racing sector has significant historical importance, and today it continues to power forward as a major agricultural economic engine across the country. From coast to coast, local standardbred racetracks are woven into the fabric of Canadian communities, providing racing, employment, and acting as hubs for community use and gathering throughout the year.

On July 1, 1767, exactly 100 years before Canada's Confederation, the first organized horse race was held on the Plains of Abraham, in historic Québec City. In 1835, the first organized trotting races took place in Montreal on the ice of the St. Pierre River. This was a humble start for a rich industry that would eventually spread from coast to coast across the country.

Horse racing is entirely reliant on revenue from wagering on racing and this is the foundation for the 50,000+ jobs supported in rural and urban communities across the country and an industry that contributes \$5.7 billion annually to the Canadian economy.

Standardbred Canada and most Canadian racetracks operate on a not-for-profit basis with net profits from wagering being redirected into industry programs.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the horse racing industry, it is imperative that all wagering continue to operate within the federally regulated pari-mutuel system and that an amendment be made to C-218 to ensure provincial lottery schemes can't license companies to offer wagering on horse racing, and that the bill incorporates language to protect the horse racing industry.

On November 26, 2020, the Canadian government presented a solution to this problem when it introduced Bill C-13, which retained Section 204(7)(b) amended as follows:

“(b) bookmaking, pool selling or the making or recording of bets, including bets made through the agency of a pool or pari-mutuel system, on any horse-race; or”

By retaining the reference to “horse-race” in Section 204(7)(b), Bill C-13 protected horseracing from incursion by fixed odds single-event sports wagering on horse races.

Standardbred Canada believes that it is incumbent upon the Standing Committee on Justice and Human Rights to incorporate the language contained in Government Bill C-13 into the Private Members Bill to protect the Canadian horse racing industry and the tens of thousands of jobs it supports.

In addition, Standardbred Canada would support that the Government consider legalizing Historical Horse Racing (HHR), a solution that has helped sustain and grow horse racing in many other jurisdictions. HHR allows individuals to wager on races that have occurred in the past, through a terminal. All the information is presented in an anonymous fashion so that the race cannot be identified.

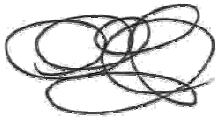
If legalized, racetracks across Canada can install HHR machines and the net income from these products can continue to be invested into industry programs and other supports for tracks to be sustainable and to keep our horse people employed.

This requires a technical amendment to the definition of “bet” in Section 197 of the Criminal Code to legalize wagering on horse races that have already occurred. HHR is a pari-mutuel product and will be regulated by the existing Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency.

Both, a carve-out for horse racing from provincial lottery schemes and the legalization of HHR are essential for our industry’s survival and the livelihood of 50,000 Canadians supported by our industry.

Please carefully consider the impact and outcomes that Private Members Bill C-218 would have on the Canadian horse racing industry, with and without Section 204(7)(b) amendment. The amendment will support the future of a world class industry steeped in history and tradition that makes major economic contributions to our country.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Gall', with a stylized, overlapping loop structure.

Dan Gall
President and CEO

cc: Bill McLinchey, Chair, Standardbred Canada
Paul Ryneveld, Chair, Government Relations, Standardbred Canada