



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Roy J. McDonald

Senator McDonald Joins Colleagues to Call for Passage of Governor's Bill to Protect Racing at Saratoga

ROY J. MCDONALD April 26, 2010

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McDonald, Farley and Little say legislation needed to safeguard hundreds of racing industry, tourism-related jobs

Senator Roy McDonald, along with Senators Hugh Farley and Elizabeth O'C Little, today called on the leadership of the New York State Senate to take swift action on a Governor's program bill designed to provide the New York Racing Association (NYRA) with the short-term fiscal relief necessary to allow an uninterrupted summer racing season at the historic Saratoga Racetrack this year, as well as protect hundreds of tourism-related jobs in Saratoga and its surrounding communities.

The Governor's program bill was introduced yesterday.

Under the legislation, NYRA would be permitted to borrow a portion of the \$250 million reappropriation for capital works purposes at Saratoga, Aqueduct and Belmont Racetracks. Under current law, the \$250 million reappropriation can only be used for services and expenses related to payments for capital works for the video lottery terminal (VLT) gaming facility at Aqueduct.

The legislation would provide NYRA with the fiscal relief necessary to shore up its finances, and ensure uninterrupted racing at Saratoga.

“With the perfect storm of problems facing New York racing, we need to take immediate action and provide solutions to ensure that the quality of racing is not impaired by a lack of action; our region depends on a successful summertime meet in Saratoga Springs,” said McDonald. “This proposal will provide NYRA with the necessary funding to compete with neighboring states so that the Saratoga Racing meet, in particular, can continue to be the best and most successful in the country.”

“Racing is an essential part of the economy, social life and history of Saratoga County, as well as the entire Capital District,” said Senator Farley. “We have been extremely frustrated by the Aqueduct delays, and alarmed that this could jeopardize the racing industry in New York State. It is crucial that action be taken now to ensure a successful racing season and protect the local economy.”

"Saratoga racing season brings tourists to Warren and Washington Counties, and parts of the Adirondacks. August is always better for hotels, motels, restaurants and attractions because of Saratoga Raceway. It is essential that the Legislature passes this legislation,” said Senator Little.

NYRA would be required to repay the loan to the operator that is ultimately chosen to run the video lottery gaming facility at Aqueduct.

This legislation would have no impact on the State’s current financial situation since it does not authorize the expenditure of any new money.

The Saratoga Racetrack is located in the 43rd Senate District, represented by Senator McDonald.

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