



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Roy J. McDonald

State Senators Roy McDonald and Jack Martins Urge Protection of Racehorses

ROY J. MCDONALD June 13, 2012

(ALBANY, NY) — State Senators Jack M. Martins (R - Mineola) and Roy J. McDonald (R - Saratoga) today called on the New York State Racing and Wagering Board to protect the health and well-being of racehorses competing in New York through a renewed commitment to the rules governing the raceday use of Lasix in the state.

"The welfare of the racehorse should be the first and most important concern for anyone involved in the Thoroughbred racing industry," said Senator McDonald. "Making a change to raceday medications, specifically banning the use of Lasix to prevent exercise-induced pulmonary hemorrhaging (EIPH), could have dangerous results. It would be unconscionable to make any horse more vulnerable to a condition that could potentially place the horse and rider into a fatal situation."

Last month, the State Racing and Wagering Board announced they were considering a rule change regarding the medication Lasix, which alleviates pulmonary hemorrhaging in horses during exercise. A ban on the raceday use of Lasix is under consideration, despite the fact that the American Association of Equine Practitioners, and every other state regulatory board in the nation, recognize the need for the medication.

"Because our mission is to protect the health and welfare of the horse, the American Association of Equine Practitioners and its members have a unique understanding of exercise-induced pulmonary hemorrhage (EIPH), the evolution of EIPH treatment and its impact on the racehorse and the sport. In the absence of a more effective treatment or preventative medication for EIPH, the AAEP supports the use of Lasix as the only medication that should be allowed on race day," AAEP President Dr. John Mitchell stated in a letter to the State Racing and Wagering

Board.

“The safety of the racehorses should be the first priority. For the racing industry to be successful, the health and safety of the horses are paramount,” Senator Martins said. “Putting any horse’s health in jeopardy by banning raceday medications is just the wrong thing to do.”

Richard A. Violette, Jr., president of the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen’s Association, said, "It is our number one responsibility to provide the horses and the riders with the safest possible environment, and the raceday use of Lasix is a proven safety measure. We applaud Senator McDonald and Senator Martins for standing up on an issue vital to the welfare of our horses."

Recently, the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen’s Association released a comprehensive five-point plan offering meaningful reform to the industry’s medication policy. The Senators urged the State Racing and Wagering Board to consider this proposal.

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