



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Pamela Helming

Senator Helming Opposes Bill to Change Representation on Western Regional OTB Board

PAMELA HELMING February 14, 2022

| ISSUE: **CRAIG M. JOHNSON**

At today's meeting of the Senate Racing, Gaming and Wagering Committee, Senator Pam Helming opposed Senate bill S.7855 that would change the membership of the board of directors of Western Regional Off-Track Betting (OTB).

Currently, each of the 15 counties that own Western Regional OTB has one member on the board of directors. The bill would reduce board representation for nine of those counties, including three in Senator Helming's district. The bill proposes one member to represent Chautauqua, Cayuga, Genesee, Livingston, Schuyler, and Seneca counties collectively; and one member to represent Oswego, Cattaraugus, and Wayne counties collectively.

Furthermore, the bill would newly allow the Governor and Senate and Assembly Majority leaders to appoint one board member each.

In today's committee meeting, Senator Helming spoke out against the bill and issued the following statement:

"This bill dilutes the representation, and the voice, of our rural counties on the board. And it's a blatant example of government overreach, allowing the Governor and Senate and Assembly Majority leaders to appoint one member each. To my knowledge, that's never been done before. Western OTB contributes significant revenue to our rural counties and supports many charitable causes in our local communities. There is no reason to change the board's membership and I oppose this bill," said Senator Helming.

Under [Senate bill S.7855](#), the Western Regional OTB board of directors would be restructured as follows: three members to represent Monroe, Wyoming and Orleans counties; one member to represent Chautauqua, Cayuga, Genesee, Livingston, Schuyler, and Seneca counties; four members to represent Erie County; one member to represent Niagara County; one member to represent Oswego, Cattaraugus, and Wayne counties; one

member to represent the city of Buffalo; one member to represent the city of Rochester; one member appointed by the Governor; one member appointed by the Temporary President of the Senate (Senate Majority Leader); and one member appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly.



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