

Talking Points for Horsemen

- In the late 1980's the citizens of Texas voted overwhelmingly for pari-mutuel wagering on both statewide and local ballots.
- Every single penny of the money used to fund the Texas Racing Commission is paid to the state by the horse industry in order to be regulated. Withholding these funds has no positive effect on regular taxpayer dollars.
- Patchwork, short-term funding for the Texas Racing Commission does great harm to a wide variety of people involved in the industry. Without the certainty and stability of long-term funding for the regulatory agency, an effective business plan cannot be executed.
- Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse meets are planned months in advance by both the racetracks and horsemen. Continued uncertainty will result in horses and horsemen leaving Texas to qualify for out-of-state races.
- Breeders are already planning matings for 2016, as well as where foals will be born in order to take advantage of state-bred programs and future racing and sales opportunities.
- At stake are tens of thousands of jobs, and racetrack employees are already beginning to leave, seeking job security beyond the next three months.
- Those in ancillary businesses, such as equipment, tack, hay and feed suppliers, farriers, veterinarians, transporters, etc. will experience negative impacts through a ripple effect.
- The horse industry is a vital part of Texas' agricultural heritage. It needs legislative support – rather than being treated as a political pawn.
- Further disruption of horseracing will do irreparable harm to the legendary horse industry in Texas, which already competes at a disadvantage with neighboring states.
- Most agree that the legality of pari-mutuel wagering on historical races is a question for the court system to decide. It is wrong for a political minority to withhold Racing Commission funding in an effort to force them to repeal historical racing rules, which would deny the horse industry's right to have its day in court.
- It is time to hold legislators accountable for their actions. The citizens of Texas deserve a transparent view of a process that to date has done little to instill public confidence in our legislative process.