



TO: House Appropriations Committee; Representative Ryckman, Chair

FROM: Megan Kilgore, Kansas Veterinary Medical Association

RE: Testimony on H.B. 2537 relating to Gaming

DATE: March 15, 2016

Chairman Ryckman and members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit written testimony before this committee in support of H.B. 2537 relating to racetrack gaming. My name is Megan Kilgore. I am providing this testimony in my role as Executive Director of the Kansas Veterinary Medical Association. The KVMA is the only statewide professional membership organization dedicated exclusively to veterinary medicine and the interests of the veterinary team.

For years, pari-mutuel gaming provided career opportunities for veterinarians in the state of Kansas. Veterinary care for equine and greyhound athletes expanded beyond routine care creating a sound environment in Kansas for equine veterinarians and orthopedic specialists. Racing provided an outlet for Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine graduates, with a passion for equine medicine, to stay and practice medicine in our state.

As state funding for higher education continues to dwindle, it's also important to discuss the economic impact pari-mutuel racing provides for the state of Kansas. When racing was strong in Kansas, Kansas State University benefited. The College of Veterinary Medicine reports they received more than \$3.2 million dollars in support for research activities related to the racing industry. Other colleges on campus have received research dollars as well. The College of Veterinary Medicine recently broke ground on a privately-supported Equine Performance Testing Center that will provide a tremendous advantage to diagnosing equine lameness.

The changes to H.B. 2537 allow a viable option for racing in Kansas and a significant boost to the Kansas economy. Current law requires racetrack gaming facilities to pay a higher percentage of gaming income from electronic gaming machines than similar gaming facilities. The recommended changes in H.B. 2537 provide an even playing field for gaming activity in the state of Kansas.

I urge the committee to support H.B. 2537. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony today.