

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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DATE September 6, 1985

## MAINE HARNESS RACING STUDY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, harness racing generates funds to support agricultural fairs, and contributes positively to the economy of the State in general; and

WHEREAS, the harness racing industry has experienced impressive growth in the recent past which has created both problems and opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the State has regulatory authority over the harness racing industry, and has responsibility for assuring that regulations do not unnecessarily constrain the economic well-being of the industry; and

WHEREAS, the ability of the State to effectively and equitably regulate the harness racing industry depends upon a precise understanding of the economy of the industry and the effects of regulations on that economy; and

WHEREAS, due to the rapidly changing character of the harness racing industry there is currently insufficient data and information available to the State regarding the economy and dynamics of the harness racing industry, which information is essential for effective and equitable regulation of that industry;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH E. BRENNAN, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby direct the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources to conduct a study of the harness racing industry, and

FURTHER, do hereby establish a Maine Harness Racing Study Advisory Committee.

A. Responsibilities

1. The Maine Harness Racing Study Advisory Committee shall provide guidance to the Commissioner for a study of the Maine harness racing industry, which study shall include:
  - a. an overview of the harness racing industry and its impact on the Maine economy and agricultural fairs. The study shall quantify the number of people involved in the industry both on track and off, including breeders and suppliers to breeding farms and other industry participants;
  - b. a comprehensive review of the current statutory authority of the Harness Racing Commission including its regulations, penalties, and personnel needs to administer such;

SEP 9 1985

- c. an evaluation of the date setting procedure including a review of the history of those dates;
- d. an evaluation of the various scenarios of competitive racing under concurrent race dates between the two major tracks in the State. This evaluation shall:
  - (1) quantify the market for each facility in terms of the betting dollar, number of bettors, and size of bets;
  - (2) determine the amount of overlap in the betting market between the two tracks;
  - (3) evaluate the likelihood of increased or decreased betting under competitive racing;
  - (4) determine the number and quality of horses currently available for racing and the probability of an increased supply to accommodate concurrent racing;
  - (5) determine the cost to the State of regulating concurrent racing as compared to current costs, and describe any changes needed in budgetary or administrative procedures to accommodate concurrent racing; and
  - (6) examine the seasonal aspects of competitive racing, including the ability of current facilities to handle racing in various seasons and the cost of changing that seasonal capability; and determine whether certain seasons should be closed as a result of these findings.
- e. An examination of simulcasting as an alternative to concurrent racing that would increase the handle and therefore returns to tracks, horsemen, and various funds.

B. Name and Membership

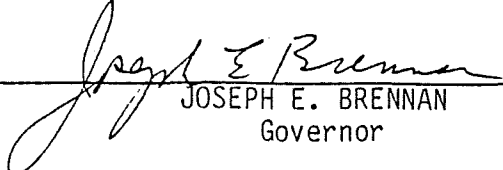
The Maine Harness Racing Advisory Committee shall consist of nine (9) members representing the two major commercial tracks, horsemen, agricultural fairs, licensed harness race officials, and the public at large. The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources shall be a member and shall Chair the Committee.

C. Resources

The Advisory Committee shall be supported by staff and facilities of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources including the Harness Racing Commission. Members of the Harness Racing Commission shall assist as appropriate. The Department shall provide outside consultation if necessary.

D. Report

The study shall be completed and the Advisory Committee shall submit a final report of its recommendations no later than December 31, 1985.

  
JOSEPH E. BRENNAN  
Governor