

To: The Honorable Pete Brungardt, Chairman, Senate Committee on State and Federal Affairs

From: Diana Friend, Kansas Quarter Horse Association, 64311 122<sup>nd</sup> St, Ozawkie, KS 66070

Date: Wednesday, February 1, 2012

RE: Kansas Gaming Legislation

The Kansas Quarter Horse Association (KQHA), representing a membership of nearly 400 equine industry professionals and amateurs, is a strong supporter of the Kansas Star Casino and Event Center near Mulvane. As such, we wish to express concerns and opposition to legislation under consideration that would adversely impact the world-class equestrian facility so many in our state are eager to see open.

In 2009, Kansas hosted 32 American Quarter Horse Association approved events across the state, with a 400-entry average per show. This number is low due to the lack of facilities available to accommodate more than 200 horses.

The Kansas Star is developing a comprehensive facility with the construction of arenas and stalls that would accommodate 416 horses, and be expandable up to 832 horses. It also plans a tremendous RV facility that would accommodate the people attending and participating in equine events and competitions.

KQHA has been forced to hold its premier event, the Prairie Classic, in another state because there is not a facility large enough and exclusive enough to attract and accommodate our exhibitors' needs. This sizeable event has unfortunately had to use the Oklahoma City fairgrounds, with trainers, exhibitors, family members and spectators staying in motels, eating at restaurants and shopping in Oklahoma City for five + days. We want this and other significant events to be held in Kansas, at the Kansas Star!

The benefit of having a facility that accommodates the needs of the equine industry reaches far beyond the Quarter horse breed, and will be of benefit of the multiple breed associations as well as specialized competitions including horse shows, rodeos, team roping, cutting and more. Attending an equine event that would also offer quality accommodations, a casino, fine dining and other activities will make the Kansas Star Casino and Event Center a highly-sought designation that currently is not being met in Kansas or elsewhere in our region.

Please consider the impact of any changes in current gaming laws on this outstanding facility and what it offers equestrian enthusiasts in our state. Specifically, please oppose the section of SB 319 that would allow for a re-vote for the race track in Sedgwick County for the reasons stated above.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.