

Statement from Rep. Andy Barr (KY-06):

Thank you, Chairwoman Schakowsky for holding this hearing on the Horseracing Integrity Act, legislation I have introduced with my colleague, Rep. Paul Tonko, to enhance uniformity, safety, and integrity in horseracing.

Nothing is more synonymous with the Commonwealth of Kentucky than thoroughbred breeding and horseracing. My District in particular holds the title Horse Capital of the World. My home, Lexington, Kentucky, is surrounded by more than 400 horse farms and Keeneland hosts many notable races including the Toyota Bluegrass Stakes and the Breeders Cup—which will be held again at the racetrack this fall. With the privilege of representing this unique industry comes the responsibility of fighting for its future.

I want to emphasize today, however, that this sport is not solely relevant to those in states that are home to Triple Crown Races. Horseracing is very much a national sport. The horse industry contributes approximately \$50 billion in direct economic impact to the U.S. economy and has a direct employment impact of 988,394 jobs. Therefore, advocating for this industry requires more than celebrating its proud heritage.

Currently regulated by 38 separate jurisdictions, the horseracing industry labors under a patchwork of conflicting and inconsistent, state-based rules governing prohibited substances, lab accreditation, testing, and penalties for violations. This lack of uniformity has impeded interstate commerce, compromised the international competitiveness of the industry, and undermined public confidence in the integrity of the sport.

The Horseracing Integrity Act would remedy these problems by authorizing the creation of a non-governmental anti-doping authority governed by representatives of all major constituencies of the industry and responsible for implementing a national, uniform medication program for the entire horseracing industry.

I am a conservative who believes in federalism and states' rights, but I also understand that the Constitution gives Congress the power to regulate interstate commerce precisely for the purpose of eliminating these kinds of impediments to interstate exchange. A national uniform medication program is not about creating more bureaucracy or regulation, rather it is about streamlining the current regulatory structure to ensure the safety of our athletes.

The most recent draft of the Horseracing Integrity Act was developed through a highly deliberative and bipartisan process and takes into consideration a diversity of perspectives from all parts of the industry. The result is support from a majority of Members of the House. We must build on the momentum in Congress and the industry as a whole to ensure the safety of our athletes and increase the popularity, public confidence, and international competitiveness of the sport.