

PUBLIC LETTER on Stance to NOT Eliminate the Choice

to Administer Lasix on Raceday

A recent open letter proclaimed that “horse racing is at a pivotal moment in its long history in the United States.” On this we agree. We also agree all of us love and cherish the equine athletes upon which our industry is built. To that end we believe in practicing the highest standards of horsemanship, and we continually work to improve the care, health and safety of our thoroughbred racehorses.

In that regard, we support horsemen and our veterinarians having the continued option to run a horse with a race-day administration of the therapeutic and protective medication furosemide (Lasix).

We, too, are ready for change and will eagerly embrace change if the alterations are done for the greater good of equine health and welfare. We are committed to reforms emphasizing transparency and developments that will address misunderstandings from those in the non-racing public as well as ensuring our horses are treated with the highest degree of care. The eradication of our choice to administer race-day Lasix will not do any of those things.

It is our belief that banning Lasix will adversely impact the health and welfare of our racehorses as well as the strength of our industry. Research also proves an increased number of horses will bleed significantly out of their nostrils, or into in their lungs, and an increased number will die.

We understand and agree things can and should be done to improve the safety and welfare of our equine athletes. It is just as important to understand what is NOT causing catastrophic injuries, as it is understanding the underlying causes. Many continue to claim Lasix will interfere with post-race drug testing due to dilution, but this argument has long been disproven. Lasix is a short-acting diuretic and the dilution effect is gone in two hours. However, the tightly regulated administration of Lasix is required four hours before a race. Thus, Lasix has no ability to interfere with blood or urine testing after a race.

No one takes our stance on this position casually, but we believe we must not be led down a path created by perception and not facts. For this reason we must stand for what is in the best interest and safety for our equine and human athletes.

This letter includes an initial round of over 600 signatures from racing stakeholders and signatures will continue to be collected going forward. Signatures include the following: Rusty Arnold; Steve Asmussen; Buff Bradley; Bret Calhoun; Anita and James Cauley; Dr. Nancy Cole; Brad Cox; Boyd Caster; Wayne Catalano, Jake Delhomme; Michael Ann Ewing; Greg Foley; Vickie Foley; Tim Glyshaw; Larry Jones; Dallas Keen; Marshall Gramm; Dr. Chuck Kidder; Mike and Penny Lauer; Mike Maker; Ron Moquett; Randy Morse; Maggi Moss; Loren Hebel Osborne; Joe Orseno; Joel Politi; Allen Poindexter; Louis J. Roussel III; Clay Sanders; Chester

Thomas; Mike Tomlinson; Tom Van Berg; Kelly Von Hemel; Gary and Mary West; Ian Wilkes; Jack Wolf; Erv Woolsey. The entire list may be viewed on hbpa.org.