

National Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association



PRESS RELEASE

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"Are We Positive HR 3084 and USADA are Good for Racing?"

One day after The Jockey Club's Round Table Conference, the press has been inundated with comments, criticism and concerns revolving around the support of The Jockey Club, along with the American Humane Society and others, for H.R. 3084.

As has been stated in several press statements, and after full review and discussion of the H.R. 3084 at the National HBPA (NHBPA) Summer Convention in Denver this past weekend, it can still be said definitively that the NHBPA stands opposed to the current Barr/Tonko bill, H.R. 3084. It can also be stated once again, the NHBPA, like other horsemen's groups as well as the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI), wants to work toward all racing jurisdictions using uniform medication and violation rules. However, the NHBPA and its state affiliates collectively believe it cannot be put in the hands of a private organization.

The United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) undoubtedly is a professional organization with experience. However, the reality is that the current makeup of the organization has no experience in equine testing. The number of human samples they test pales in comparison to the number of equine samples tested each year. To add to the complication, the new association will be comprised of board members clearly defined to have no industry ties. This component, along with six USADA members from the current USADA Board, equals 11 members with only periphery knowledge of our sport. Forgive us, but we see that as a significant issue.

Take into account H.R. 3084 also seems to put the regulatory actions currently conducted by state regulatory agencies into the hands of the created USADA entity. Thus laboratory testing programs, investigatory programs, and hearings conducted for rule violations all shift to a private entity given the power to trump state rights.

It must be understood that the most important aspect in all of this current media deliberation is the welfare of our equine athletes. Somehow that message is not being conveyed, and to the contrary, it seems as the voice of a small number of constituents is being viewed as the voice of the majority and they are controlling the message. Those who continue to publicize our industry as a sport riddled with doping and cheaters cannot prove nor backup these allegations with facts. The use of the word "doping" is unbelievably incorrect and shows ignorance on the topic. The usage of therapeutic medications is not doping in human or equine athletes. Neither of these allegations: "our sport is riddled with cheaters" or "doping runs rampant throughout Thoroughbred racing" can be substantiated through fact or science, and the NHBPA stands by facts and science.

It is time for those of us who have the knowledge and understanding of the truth and facts to stand together and contradict those who spread falsehoods riddled with unsubstantiated allegations. The NHBPA is, and continues to be ready, to answer the question "Where's the positive?"

The National HBPA (www.hbpa.org) based in Lexington, KY is the largest racing horsemen's representative organization in North America with 30 affiliate organizations and over 30,000 member horsemen. Big Dee's Tack & Vet Supply's, Finish Line Horse Products Inc., Horseman Labor Solutions and Omega Alpha Pharmaceuticals, Inc. are proud corporate partners of the National HBPA.

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