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TELLING OUR STORY

The Cal-Bred Turf Extravaganza was indeed a great day of racing at Golden Gate Fields, and the CTBA invited some very special guests. Educating legislators and their staff about all aspects of racing is critical to our ongoing success in this state. Competing with card room and tribal governments to allow new or expanded gaming opportunities and occasionally even intra-industry fights are often decided by the 120 members of the legislature.

Racing is historic, beautiful, and economically important, and it employs a significant number of people. Nothing tells that story better than seeing the horses and meeting the people who make it all happen. For people who visit the track for the first time, it's almost always love at first sight. I'm always reminded that in this age of 24-hour-a-day, device-driven information, we can do a better job of communicating the beauty of racing, the excitement of wagering, and even instructions on how to wager.

Assemblymembers Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D-Napa), Kevin Kiley (R-Eldorado Hills), and Mike Gipson (D-Carson) learned a great deal about racing and toured the backstretch with Gloria Haley. Learning about the people employed at the track and on the farms is something all legislators enjoy. Meeting the Board members, jockeys, and trainers puts a face behind the horses. They learn about the rigorous drug testing unmatched by any other professional sport. They learn that the love we have for these equine athletes is often quite different from what they might have been told in the past. We

greatly appreciate these legislators for taking their time to learn about our industry.

April also brought legislators to Santa Anita. The invitations were a first for our union partners at Service Employees International Union, one of the largest and most powerful in the state with 700,000 members. The powerful Executive Director of the union, Alma Hernandez, along with Rene Bayardo and Local 280 Vice President John Valenzuela, talked to legislators about the importance of racing to their members and the need to increase revenues to support their track jobs. Terry Lovingier also added the voice of an owner and breeder.

Sen. Scott Wilk (R-Lancaster) and his wife, Vanessa, made a return trip to Santa Anita, joined by Assembly members Raul Bocanegra (D-San Fernando) and Reggie Jones-Sawyer (D-Los Angeles). Working with SEIU in this very Blue State raised the bar and helped gain the \$60 million for racing that was in the Adam Gray bill in the last session, and the union will certainly be helpful with both sports wagering and Daily Fantasy Spots (DFS), should either move forward this session.

Both DFS and Sports Wagering are evolving issues. The Supreme Court could hear the New Jersey case within a few months, or Congress could take action, given the recent support from some in professional sports. And in May a federal judge ruled that the horse racing website Derby Wars has been operating as an off-track betting business and is thus subject to the federal Interstate Horseracing Act, which requires consent of racetracks and racing commissioners prior to accepting

any wagers. Judge James Otero, U.S. District Court for the Central District of California, handed down the order on May 15 in favor of The Stronach Group. This will certainly be helpful as the DFS folks try to move a bill in Sacramento.

Internet poker is currently on hold as the stalemate over "bad actors" or "suitability" with regard to PokerStars remains the issue. The original PokerStars coalition, which included several cardrooms and two tribes, has seen a few setbacks this year. San Manuel left the coalition, and two cardrooms are currently under investigation by the Gambling Commission.

It continues to amaze me in this 10-year fight for Internet poker how many people still don't realize you can place a bet today, on your device through an ADW. The question of "where can I place a bet?" arises especially frequently during the Triple Crown races from people of all professions and ages. Making it easier for folks to set up an account with their bank would also be helpful, and racing could help by working with major banks to accept the ADW merchant codes.

In closing, the world's largest cardroom, Commerce Casino, completed the remodel and expanded its wagering facility by 2,000 square feet in time for Kentucky Derby Day. The handle on that day was up 35% over the prior year! And one of the state's wealthiest tribes is awaiting approval to begin construction of its new state-of-the-art wagering facility at its very popular casino in Southern California. Every victory counts as we continue to fight for our future. **CTB**