



April 23, 2024

To: Members of the Sunset Review Committee

From: Christopher Dragone, Executive Director
Ohio State Racing Commission

Re: Ohio Standardbred Development Commission

The following information is submitted to address questions contained in part B or C of Section 101.86 of the Ohio Revised Code.

(B1) The Ohio Standardbred Development Commission (“OSDC”) was created in section 3769.085 of the Revised Code. The OSDC oversees expenditures of the Ohio Standardbred Development Fund (“OSDF”). The OSDC allocates and approves Ohio Sires Stakes (“OSS”) races and conditions supported by the OSDF. Money from the fund is used to promote breeding and racing in Ohio by providing money for purses. Only horses sired by a stallion registered with the Ohio State Racing Commission (“OSRC”) are eligible to enter OSS races.

(B2) The OSDC meets several times each year, giving horsemen, track managements and the public a chance to provide input about OSS conditions and races for the following year. OSDC members also receive input from stakeholders (horsemen, track managers, breeders, and owners of associated businesses) throughout the year. OSDC members regularly attend when live racing takes place. There were 459 racing dates at commercial standardbred racetracks and 117 racing dates at county fairs in 2023.

(B3) The OSDF is funded by taxes paid on wagers made at four commercial standardbred racetracks and 62 county fairs; from the distribution of a portion of tax money paid by casinos that is received by the OSRC; and from



distributions of Video Lottery Terminal proceeds approved by the OSRC. Purses for OSS races supported by the OSDF amounted to \$6.5 million in 2023.

(B4) The OSDC consists of three members appointed by the governor. No member receives any compensation. Although all members are entitled to actual and necessary expenses, no member has requested to be reimbursed for any expense during the past five years.

There is a public need for the continued existence of the OSDC. Section 101.86(C) of the Revised Code states the following should be considered:

(C1) All members of the OSDC must be residents of the state, knowledgeable in the breeding and racing of Standardbred horses. Members are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate to three-year terms.

(C2) The OSDF has one employee on a part-time basis that works for the commission. Administration responsibilities have been taken on by the OHHA, which includes marketing and advertising. Two other OSRC employees, including the executive director and the fiscal officer, work with the OSDC to assist in attaining its primary purpose. While the amount of money available for distribution varies annually, the workload remains the same for this agency. Administrative costs are paid by the OSDF.

(C3) The operation of the OSDC has not been impeded by existing statutes and procedures or by budgetary, resource, or personnel practices. The OSDC operates in the public interest by educating and promoting the Standardbred horse racing industry.

(C4) The OSDC has not recommended any statutory changes to the General Assembly in the past five years.

(C5) The OSDC does not regulate any persons.

(C6) The OSDC does not regulate any persons.

(C7) The OSDC encourages public participation in its decision-making. Public meetings are held prior to deciding upon an OSS purse schedule, dates



of races and conditions for the following year. Meetings are well attended by horse owners, trainers, and racetrack managers in addition to the public.

(C8) There have been no formal complaints during the last five years.

(C9) The programs or services of the OSDC do not duplicate or overlap those of other agencies.

(C10) The OSDC purpose has not changed since it was last reviewed.

(C11) There are no known federal laws that require the OSDC to be renewed in some form.

(C12) There are no changes needed in the enabling laws of the OSDF Commission in order for it to comply with the criteria suggested by the considerations listed in Section 101.86(C)(1) to (11) of the Revised Code.

In 1933, pari-mutuel wagering was legalized at Ohio's existing racetracks. This wagering was authorized by the passage of the Horse Racing Act by the Ninetieth General Assembly. The legislation (Emmons Bill) was proposed in an effort to raise revenues and create jobs during the depression.

The OSDC and OSDF were created as a result of the passage of H.B. 287 in 1975. The first OSS races were held in 1976 for total purses of \$735,100. As stated above, purses were \$6.5 million in 2023.