



April 23, 2024

To: Members of the Sunset Review Committee

From: Christopher Dragone, Executive Director
 Ohio State Racing Commission

Re: Ohio Thoroughbred Racing Advisory Committee

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

(B1) The Ohio Thoroughbred Racing Advisory Committee (“Committee”) was created in section 3769.084 of the Revised Code. The Committee advises and assists the Ohio State Racing Commission (“OSRC”) regarding the administration of the Ohio Thoroughbred Race Fund (“OTRF”) created by section 3769.083 of the Revised Code. The OTRF is used to promote racing and breeding in the state by providing purse money for accredited Ohio horses (horses sired by an Ohio stallion) and Ohio-foaled horses, and breeders’ awards to owners of stallions and broodmares. A portion of annual funding is also used to market thoroughbred racing in Ohio and nationally.

There are 293 live thoroughbred racing programs scheduled in 2024. The Committee meets formally several times a year to discuss any changes necessary during the current year and to determine what conditions should be set for the following year’s program. Thoroughbred horsemen, track management and the public are given a chance to provide input about racing conditions and dates of stakes races.

(B2) The OTRF has an administrator who is paid by the OTRF and also serves as the OTRF registrar. Two other OSRC employees (including the executive director and fiscal officer) work with the Committee to assist it in attaining its primary



purpose. While the amount of money available for distribution varies annually, the workload remains the same for this agency.

(B3) The OTRF derives money from taxes on wagers made at thoroughbred racing commercial racetracks in Ohio, from the distribution of a portion of tax money received by the OSRC from casinos, and from distributions of Video Lottery Terminal proceeds approved by the OSRC. OTRF disbursements totaled just over \$12 million in 2023.

(B4) The Committee consists of three members appointed by the governor. No member receives compensation. Although all members are entitled to actual and necessary expenses, no member has requested reimbursement for expenses in the past five years.

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

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

(C2) The OTRF has an administrator who also serves as the registrar of the OTRF. This individual fields inquiries from industry participants and the general public, schedules meetings and prepares background documents for them, enters information in a database, and contributes to annual reports. Two other OSRC employees, including the executive director and the fiscal officer, work with the Committee to assist it in attaining its primary purpose.

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

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

(C5) The Committee does not regulate any persons.

(C6) The Committee does not regulate any persons.



(C7) The Committee does encourage public participation in its decision-making. Committee members talk regularly with industry stakeholders. Meetings are open to the public and held to gather input from thoroughbred horsemen and commercial racetrack managers each year before proposing annual expenditures and establishing a stakes program and schedule.

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

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

(C10) The Committee's purpose has not changed and has been fulfilled since it was last reviewed.

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

(C12) There are no changes needed in the enabling laws of the Committee 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 Committee and OTRF were created as a result of legislation approved by the General Assembly in 1965. The racing program for Thoroughbreds was worth \$456,691 for 1967. As stated above, the budget exceeded \$12 million in 2023.