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Mayor Brian Turnbull

February 11, 2020

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Regulatory Reform Committee,

My name is Brian Turnbull, and I represent the citizens of Northville, as its mayor. Northville, Michigan, is both in Wayne and Oakland counties.

My family has been deeply involved in the Northville community for five generations, and it has been our pleasure & privilege to have worked with our Northville Downs partner (the Carlo Family) on building this community over the past century.

I understand that the House Regulatory Reform Committee will discuss and eventually vote on Senate Bill 661. This bill, to our knowledge, was passed in the Senate in December 2019. SB 661 would legalize betting on "Historic Horse Racing." This kind of betting (which I have reviewed) utilizes a different kind of slot machine, where a randomly selected historic horse race (unknown to the better) is re-enacted in animated format. For many years, the track operators (the Carlo family) have been supportive of a Bill of this nature to *save* horse racing, which has long been declining in Michigan. The honorable Senator Ananich sponsored the bill, and as we understand, he is hoping to re-open the Sports Creek Racetrack in Flint if this bill is passed. This type of betting could enhance the economics of various communities.

As we (in Northville, Michigan) open our Master Plan for the future of the Racetrack area, there is widespread discussion with and among our city officials and others in the community about the future of this real estate. This new legislation, we understand, could give some staying power & financial support to the Racetrack for a window of time. Admittedly, it could potentially double our (City of Northville's) breakage revenue, but on a relative scale, this increase is not that significant (\$200K to possibly \$400K on a \$18 Million Budget). The Northville Downs Racetrack Group (the Carlo Family) have been a great citizen and have been involved in community activities for most of the last century. Most assuredly, the city appreciates that.

In conclusion, the City was just made aware of this bill on Thursday afternoon, 2/6. At this point, without a thorough review of the potential impact data and greater clarity regarding options for the future development of the Racetrack property, ***the City cannot support SB 661 in its current form***. However, if the bill could be amended to provide for some local approval (either a vote of the people or governing body), it would give the community the time and the information it needs to decide whether such a significant change in the operation of Northville Downs is in the best interest of the community.

We truly appreciate the legislative body for giving us an opportunity to present our position here today. Again, the City cannot support SB 661 in its present form.

Brian P. Turnbull
Mayor – City of Northville