

May 12, 2021

Members of the Oregon Legislature -

Horse racing is more than just an industry that I've worked in for the past 27 years. It's a place where I've made lifelong friends – and even where I met my husband. Of course, it's no secret that the industry is trying to find ways to survive these days.

There aren't many opportunities for teenagers to get jobs walking horses, as my husband did when he began working in the industry in 1973. Heck, there aren't even many opportunities to support the industry by selling tickets, as I did for nearly three decades for Portland Meadows. But it's an industry that thousands of Oregon residents are committed to helping save.

I lost my job when Portland Meadows closed. I spent several months unemployed before an opportunity came to provide customer service for a new Oregon company helping to support the horse racing industry through online wagering on historic horse races. Of course, I was familiar with pari-mutuel wagering and how it's uniquely different from traditional casino-style wagering. I also knew how to offer great customer service to players and developing personal connections with many of them. But at the time, I wasn't familiar with Luckii.

The opportunity to work for Luckii has not only meant that I can continue my career, but it means I can once again be part of doing something to support an industry that has meant so much to me for so many years. On a more personal level, it also meant I once again had access to health care benefits, which has meant so much during this pandemic.

I take great pride in knowing that a portion of our revenues directly supports the horsemen and breeders, including boosting purses that attract more people to the tracks, meaning even more revenue for the state from even more visitors to tracks.

I'm not sure if horse racing will ever fully return to what it once was. But I know that it continues to be an important industry not just to me but to the veterinarians, feed store owners, tack shops, trainers, track employees, and countless other small business owners across our state. When a company like ELS Gaming invests in a product like Luckii, then chooses to invest in Oregon, they're also choosing to invest in all of us. The amendments proposed to SB 165 would shut down Luckii, eliminate jobs like mine, and cut off support to Oregon's horse racing industry. I ask that you pass SB165 without the proposed amendments.

Being part of saving horse racing is something special. I hope that as you listen to testimony and read letters like mine, you recognize what a tremendous opportunity it is to be part of something making such a positive impact in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Sharon Bullene
Customer Service, Luckii