



February 25, 2022

Chuck Coolidge
Chair
Arizona Department of Gaming Division of Racing

Rory S. Goreé
Vice Chair
Arizona Department of Gaming Division of Racing

Tracy Olson
Racing Commissioner
Arizona Department of Gaming Division of Racing

Via e-mail: publicaffairs@azgaming.gov

Dear Messrs. Coolidge and Goreé and Ms. Olson:

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals U.S.—PETA entities have more than 9 million members and supporters globally—to request that racing be suspended immediately at Turf Paradise until CT scanning equipment is installed to detect pre-existing injuries.

When interviewed about the recently increasing death toll at the track—which now stands at 24 for the racing season—General Manager Vincent Francia was quoted as saying, “One of the things that keeps popping up is the horse had a pre-existing condition. ... What that means is the horse had something where the horse is not 100%. It was not spotted by the trainers, it was not spotted by the veterinarians.”¹

The installation of cutting-edge CT scanning equipment on all tracks should be of the highest priority. Evidence shows that more than 90% of broken bones in horses are caused by pre-existing conditions—specifically, injuries at the site of the break.²

Bone injuries sometimes can't be identified by a visual inspection of a horse. Even when multiple injury-masking medications haven't been administered to horses, they still may not appear lame. The standing technology developed by CurveBeam and equine veterinarian Dr. Sheila Lyons can be used to detect such injuries—without having to anesthetize horses.³ CurveBeam's pedCAT tool is low radiation, which is important for the safety of both horses and technicians.

¹Gracia, N. (2022, Feb. 16). Trouble at Turf Paradise: Animal welfare advocates raise concerns over high horse death rates. *Fox 10*. <https://www.fox10phoenix.com/news/trouble-at-turf-paradise-animal-welfare-advocates-raise-concerns-over-high-horse-death-rates>

²Dr. Arthur, R. (2010, Aug.). Racing medication and testing consortium. *The Jockey Club*. <https://www.jockeyclub.com/default.asp?section=RT&year=2010&area=11>

³Berner, M. (2019, July 16). Technology can help get horse racing off drugs. *HorseRaceInsider.com*. <https://www.horseraceinsider.com/technology-gets-horse-racing-off-drugs/>

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Horses can simply be walked onto and off the scanner, which has no visibly moving parts, and it will produce three-dimensional scans of all four legs in under 10 minutes. It can thus be used to screen large numbers of horses in a short period. The bilateral scans provide veterinarians with the information they need to assess the biomechanical spatial relationships and alignment of the lower extremities.⁴

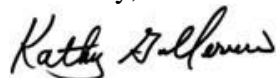
This imaging technology is already being used in human sports and is much more practical than time-consuming MRIs, which can require horses to be still for half an hour or longer. It also doesn't require injections of isotopes as PET scans do. While MRIs and PET scans are useful diagnostic tools, they're ineffective at screening for pre-existing conditions.

Significantly, CurveBeam has also developed and patented artificial-intelligence software. Dr. Lyons proposes a year-long study during which scan data will be collected and input into the software program, which will then generate scan results without a veterinarian having to read all the individual images. This means that the CurveBeam scan can be used to screen hundreds of horses each week, rather than simply serving as a diagnostic tool for small numbers of horses.

Vice Chair Rory Goreé said, “[W]e keep killing horses like this, we’re going to be out of business ... and I have to ask myself—how did we get to this point?”⁵ It’s evident that immediate action to protect horses in Arizona by mandating the use of CT scanning equipment will benefit all horses racing at Turf Paradise and should be required. As a point of clarification, neither Dr. Lyons nor CurveBeam asked that PETA approach you.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



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Equine Matters Department
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cc: Vincent Francia, General Manager, Turf Paradise (vfrancia@turfparadise.net)

⁴Berner, M. (2019, July 16). Technology can help get horse racing off drugs. *HorseRaceInsider.com*.
<https://www.horseraceinsider.com/technology-gets-horse-racing-off-drugs/>

⁵Voss, N. (2022, Feb. 15). ‘Morally wrong’: Sad journey of Creative Plan raises concerns about horse welfare at Turf Paradise. *Paulick Report*. <https://paulickreport.com/news/the-biz/morally-wrong-sad-journey-of-creative-plan-raises-concerns-about-horse-welfare-at-turf-paradise/>