S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

9869

I N A S S E M B L Y

April 19, 2012

Introduced by M. of A. ABBATE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Employees

AN ACT to amend the racing, pari-mutuel wagering and breeding law, in relation to provision of health insurance and supplemental benefits to retirees of the New York city off-track betting corporation; and making an appropriation therefor

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Legislative intent. The state of New York has an interest in the welfare of its citizens, and the general welfare of its senior citizens is a matter of great public concern to the state. On December 7, 2010, the New York city off-track betting corporation, a public benefit corporation created in 1973 pursuant to article VI of the racing, pari-mutual wagering and breeding law ceased operations. The legislature finds that, since its inception, off-track betting in the city of New York provided the state with significant revenues to support government operations. The legislature further finds that after the governor issued an executive order to allow the New York city off-track betting corporation to file for bankruptcy pursuant to Chapter 9 of the United States Bankruptcy Code, the unions representing the employees of such off-track betting corporation worked tirelessly to assist the corporation in its restructuring efforts, including two collective bargaining agreements wherein the employees made significant concessions, including voluntary separation from the corporation, in order to save the corporation and assist their fellow employees.

The legislature further finds that employees retired from such corporation, after having received the assurance that they and their dependants would receive health insurance and supplemental benefit coverage under their collective bargaining representative's welfare benefit program. After the closure of the New York city off-track betting corporation, those benefits ceased.

The legislature further finds that cessation of these benefits to public employees who have devoted their working lives to service of a state public benefit corporation works a great injustice and a severe

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [ ] is old law to be omitted.

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hardship to the retirees and their dependants, thereby putting their health and very lives in danger.

The legislature further finds that by honoring the commitment to provide health insurance and supplemental benefits to retirees of the New York city off-track betting corporation, the state reaffirms its commitment to ameliorate the deleterious impact which the closure of such corporation has had upon the citizens of the state.

S 2. Subdivision 4 of section 606 of the racing, pari-mutuel wagering and breeding law, as amended by chapter 115 of the laws of 2008, is amended to read as follows:

4. All [employees and officers] PRESENT AND FUTURE RETIREES of the corporation in classes or positions whose incumbents, in equivalent classes or positions of the city, are eligible, as of the effective date hereof, to participate in, and receive benefits from any city authorized health insurance or welfare benefit program, shall be eligible to participate in, and receive benefits from any such health insurance or welfare benefit program; provided, however, that the [corporation] STATE shall reimburse the city or its designee for the actual cost of benefits under this subdivision.

S 3. The sum of seven million dollars ($7,000,000), or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the department of civil service out of any moneys in the state treasury in the general fund to the credit of the aid to localities account, not otherwise appropriated, and made immediately available, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act. Such moneys shall be payable on the audit and warrant of the comptroller on vouchers certified or approved by the president of the civil service commission in the manner prescribed by law.

S 4. This act shall take effect immediately.