STATE OF NEW YORK

2612

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 21, 2025

Introduced by Sen. ADDABBO -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Racing, Gaming and Wagering

AN ACT to amend the racing, pari-mutuel wagering and breeding law, in relation to horsemen's health, welfare, pension and administrative benefits for harness racing licensees in the absence of contractual obligations

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Subparagraph (ii) of paragraph a of subdivision 1 of section 318 of the racing, pari-mutuel wagering and breeding law, as amended by chapter 243 of the laws of 2020, is amended to read as follows:

(ii) except as otherwise provided in this paragraph an amount equal to six and eight-tenths percent of the total pool resulting from on-track regular bets, an amount equal to seven and ninety-five one hundredths percent of the total pool resulting from on-track multiple bets, an amount equal to ten and one-half percent of the total pool resulting from on-track exotic bets, an amount equal to fifteen and one-half percent of the total daily pool resulting from on-track super exotic bets shall be used exclusively for purses, of which an amount of not less than ninety percent shall be used exclusively for purses for overnight races conducted by such association or corporation. Such amounts may be reduced upon an application approved by the commission and an agreement between the licensed harness racing corporation or association and the representative horsemen's organization as a condition to reduce the amounts of retained percentages as provided for in this section. However, of the total amount available for purses, an amount as determined by contractual obligations between an organization representing at least fifty-one percent of the owners and trainers using the facilities of such association or corporation for racing, training or stabling

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

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purposes and the association or corporation, **or in the absence of a contract between the licensed harness racing corporation or association and the representative horsemen's organization, the state gaming commission shall as a condition of racing require an association or corporation to withhold and pay eight percent of all unpaid and existing monies and to pay such sum to the horsemen's organization quarterly which** shall be used for the administrative purposes of said organization and for such welfare and medical plans for regularly employed backstretch employees principally employed at the facilities of such corporation or association as provided by said organization, provided, however, that eligibility for benefits in such plans shall not be conditioned upon membership in such organization by any employee or employer thereof, and any denial of eligibility for benefits in such plans which, upon investigation and review by the commission, is determined to have resulted from a person, firm, association, corporation or organization knowingly aiding in or permitting eligibility for benefits being conditioned upon membership in such organization shall subject such organization to the penalties imposed under sections three hundred ten and three hundred twenty-one of this article but the ratio between the amounts actually expended for such welfare and medical plans and the cost actually incurred in administering such welfare and medical plans for fiscal years of such corporation or association, on or after July twenty-fourth, nineteen hundred eighty-one, shall not be less than the ratio between such amounts actually expended and such costs actually incurred for the fiscal year immediately prior to such date. Such organization shall annually on or before July first certify to the commission that it represents at least fifty-one percent of such owners and trainers and provide copies of such certification to such association or corporation. Any other organization claiming to represent at least fifty-one percent of such owners and trainers may file a challenge with the commission within fifteen days of such original certification. The commission shall examine such claim and may undertake studies and conduct hearings to determine the validity of such claim. Within sixty days of receiving such challenge and based upon the findings of such studies and hearings, the commission shall render a decision on the validity of such claim and advise such organizations and association or corporation of its determination. Upon receipt of such original certification by such organization, the association or corporation shall make such payments to said organization and, in the event of a challenge brought to any other organization, such payments shall continue to be made until such time as the commission renders its decision on such challenge; and

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.