



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

William Larkin

Larkin Bill Would Help Save Retired Race Horses

William J. Larkin Jr.

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The New York State Senate has passed legislation (S.4641) sponsored by Senator Bill Larkin (R-C, Cornwall-on-Hudson) to create a task force on retired race horses to identify and encourage more productive uses for race horses after their use in the racing industry has ended.

Currently in the State of New York, there is no policy or state agency that offers alternatives for race horses other than slaughter once they have retired.

"This task force would identify new options suitable for retired race horses so that their economic value is higher than their value as meat," said Senator Larkin.

"Increasing the value of these beautiful animals will help to keep more of them alive and let them retire with dignity."

Larkin cited an article published in The Horsemen's Journal, Summer 2004, by Melissa Sykes, which stated that 85 percent of all horses bred for racing are not going to be successful race horses. This fact is corroborated by Thoroughbred

Owners and Breeders Association statistics that maintain that only about 20 percent of race horses earn their keep from purses. "For those that don't, the slaughterhouse often awaits," said Larkin. "Jockey Club statistics also show that roughly 20 percent of each year's foal crop will go to slaughter. However, with a little retraining and horsemanship, some of these horses could make the transition from the race track to the riding ring and other gainful work. I believe they are worth saving."

The bill now goes to the Governor for his approval.