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Statement for the Joint Public Hearing on the Welfare of Racehorses - June 5, 2019

Thank you Senators Addabbo and Martinez for holding today's hearing on the Welfare of Racehorses. My name is Jill Lauri and I am writing on behalf of the Racehorses - magnificent, sentient beings - who while at the center of this inquiry, have no voice of their own. This hearing not only honors them, it also honors the Sport of Horse Racing and Us as Human Beings.

Horse Racing has become more than a sport - it is a big business. The people in positions of power within the industry are focused on profits rather than the Welfare of the Horses. It is up to us to represent the interests of the Race Horses with Integrity, Conscience and Compassion.

The number of Race Horses that needlessly collapse and die each year is right before our eyes. Their bodies are pushed beyond what they are designed to handle. Drugs that seek to maximize performance compromise the Horses' health and well-being. This needs to be carefully monitored by experts outside of the industry, with stiff penalties for abuse.

Imagine if athletes in another sport were collapsing and dying with this frequency. Also imagine that after giving heart/soul to a sport and making millions of dollars per year for the team owners, the athletes were brutally and mercilessly killed. I venture to say that we would not tolerate any of this. These activities are also deplorable when it comes to Race Horses.

There is a lot of money in the Horse Racing Industry. It is fair and just that each human player along the way contributes to the care of the Horses - both while they are actively racing and after. The Need for us to enact legislation to protect the Welfare of Racehorses is real. The Money is there. What is yet to be determined is whether we have the Courage to harness our human spirit and do what it takes to extend Race Horses the Respect and Protection that they deserve.

Thank You.