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March 31, 2003

The Honorable Senator William Raggio, Chairman
Members of the Senate Taxation Committee
Nevada State Legislature
Legislative Building
Carson City, NV 89701

Re: Senate Bill 3

Dear Chairman Raggio and Members of the Committee:

The Elko County Fair has been a tradition in Nevada for over 80 years. Horse racing, with pari-mutual betting has been a part of the Fair since it's very beginning. Elko's 6-day race meet is the only live horse racing meet active in Nevada. However in addition to Elko's race meet there are mule races held each year in Winnemucca. Because of the declining gold mining based economy in northeastern Nevada, many of our racing sponsors are unable to continue their support and live horse racing in Nevada is in jeopardy as a result. The purpose of Senate Bill 3 is to assist County Fairs in keeping horse racing programs alive.

The local employment security office reports that since 1995, over 4000 people have left the work force in northeastern Nevada, primarily in Elko County. The negative economic impact to this area has been substantial and these facts make it all the more apparent, that positive economic events such as the Elko County Fair and Race Meet need to be supported and enhanced.

The annual race meet in Elko attracts horses from Wyoming, Utah, Oregon, Idaho and other Western States. The 2002 meet saw approximately 290 horses stalled at the fairgrounds. Less than 20 of these horses were from Nevada. Over 90% of the horses came from the states listed above. These horses bring trainers, grooms, jockeys, owners and racing enthusiasts to our community who spend money in our hotels, restaurants, casinos, retail stores and gas stations. Many of these individuals stay in our community for as many as twelve days. The overall economic benefit to this community is very important. Room