



City of Saratoga Springs

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Re: Collapse of VLT at Aqueduct.

Today, this is a call to action.

We are here today due to the continued uncertainty and delay on the part of New York State in finalizing the commitment of the VLT operator at Aqueduct. The time line to date has been simply unacceptable and poses a real threat to the long term success of racing, beyond Saratoga and to the State at large.

It's been eight years in the making for this VLT deal, with New York State producing numerous delays in the bidding process, then the selection of the bid of Delaware North, and finally the recently confirmed inability to produce a contract. Now add into the mix the efforts by the State to expand VLT operations into Belmont Park, a component that was not part of the original bid specifications.

With the overlay of the economic downturn, is it any wonder things have now fallen apart and the New York racing industry may be faced with going back to square one, to rebid the entire process, at this late date?

This plan has been on three Governors desks to date, still without resolution, with every delay financially hurting every taxpayer. For example, the State is estimated to lose \$1 Million per day by not going forward and the State budget relies upon the \$370 million not realized by finalizing the deal.

Of course some may say our interest here is only for Saratoga. That is not the point. As already stated, it's the future of all New York racing that may be at stake from these delays. That being said, the economic impact of Saratoga racing upon this County and eight neighboring Counties (Albany, Columbia, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Schenectady, Warren, Washington) has been measured and confirmed in a 2006 study commissioned by Saratoga County IDA. All tolled, the economic impact annually, annually to our region is calculated to be between \$186 million and \$213 million, with additional impact to roughly 3,000 jobs created here and expansion in the local breeding industry. Therefore, the stakes of endangering racing cannot be understated.

That is why I'm standing here with our business leaders and County officials, to collectively and with a unified voice to demand a sense of urgency from New York State.

We'll now be reaching out to our neighboring eight counties, to gain their support as well and lobby for our mutual interests in Albany.

Our plan – Lobby our Governor and legislature with the assistance of Roy McDonald and other State officials.

Our message to New York State is quite simple:

1. New York State can no longer delay this process and needs to initiate a plan of action immediately. We are at the critical point of endangering all New York racing.
2. We must move ahead quickly and in a business like manner, by bringing good business practices to government.
3. The time to decisively act is now.