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**JOHNSON FOLLOWS UP ON PLEDGE TO SUPPORT NYRA**  
*Mayoral candidate and his campaign collect 2,681 petition signatures*

Scott Johnson, the Republican candidate for Mayor of Saratoga Springs, showed today why he is prepared to lead the City. After publicly throwing his support behind NYRA in their bid to retain the racing franchise, Johnson organized a massive petition drive that accumulated 2,681 signatures of support in a matter of days.

“As I watched the decision regarding the racing franchise unfold, it became clear to me that our City lacked real leadership,” said Johnson. “The direction of Saratoga Springs could change at the drop of a hat if the franchise were awarded to a group whose interests were not aligned with the City. While our current Mayor and her rival sat on the sidelines, I took action.”

After following the process for the past two years, researching on his own, attending the Saratoga Institute of Racing and Gaming for the past five years, and hearing from experts and the public at a town hall meeting a few weeks ago, Johnson decided to support NYRA. His move was carefully thought out and was done after a thorough assessment of all bidders.

Meanwhile, Mayor Keehn simply wrote a letter to the Governor to request certain conditions be placed on whomever gets the franchise. She failed to indicate any preference whatsoever among the bidders, essentially deferring to the Governor. Gordon Boyd, just hours ago, and days following Johnson’s endorsement of NYRA, indicated a preference for NYRA. This followed months of indecision and previously advocating only a one year extension to NYRA, without leading any community input or support. Both have simply been reactive, not proactive, on such a crucial issue to our City.

For decades, NYRA has been a willing partner in the growth and prosperity of Saratoga Springs. They have gone out of their way to make many improvements to the track, while at the same time keeping the cultural and architectural traditions in place.

There has also been a constant and unwavering focus on the quality of racing; a commitment that has made Saratoga Race Course the premier racetrack in the nation, if not the world. NYRA has continued to provide world class racing, while maintaining our exclusive and limited racing meet. Those factors weighed heavily in Johnson’s decision.

“I refuse to be wishy-washy or non-committal on such a pivotal issue for Saratoga Springs,” added Johnson. “We deserve strong, decisive leadership, but leadership isn’t just about saying the right things. It’s about rolling up your sleeves and taking action. You don’t just ‘talk the talk’, you ‘walk the walk’. It’s the Mayor’s job and responsibility to the community to lead, to collaborate and unite Saratoga Springs.

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My administration will be all about 'Better Leadership for a Better Saratoga'. My action on this issue is just one example of what the residents of Saratoga Springs can expect from me when I am elected. I am not afraid to make the tough decisions. I am not afraid to stand up for what I think is best for the City; to preserve and protect our special interests in the face of some expected criticism. I am not afraid to listen to the public and be their voice. But most importantly, I am ready to lead this City and be the next Mayor of Saratoga Springs."

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