CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Mr. Pascal.

MR. PASCAL: Pascal.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: David Pascal?

MR. PASCAL: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Yes?

MR. PASCAL: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Please go right ahead.

MR. PASCAL: Good afternoon. My name is David Pascal, a long time fan of horse racing. I chair a committee of fellow racing enthusiast that for over five years has worked on numerous projects with industry leaders in California and elsewhere.

The six million race fans in the United States love this sport. It’s excitement, pageantry, folklore, and it’s traditions. American race fans have longstanding traditions to uphold.

Did you know an entry in George Washington’s diary states that he lost 1 pound 6 in wagers at a race meet in Annapolis in 1772? And in 1790 at the race course in Alexandria his colt, Magnolia, was defeated by a horse owned by Thomas Jefferson.

My children are not youngsters, but if they were I would not hesitate having a day at the races as a family outing. Race tracks provide clean and safe activities specifically for kids. And I view them as a haven especially when compared to alarming growth of spectator sports or in so called professional receive extremely high salaries to engage in real or feigned violence that often leads violence among the spectators themselves.
In addition to being distinct from other spectator sports, racing is very different from other types of gambling. It is more intellectually challenging and it embodies and drama simply not found in other gambling options. Tossing to plastic cubes across a table hoping that they up come a seven, simply doesn’t compare to the contest of horses and riders in a stretch duel to finish line. Don’t even try to compare racing to video poker or similar electronic adventures where we can view the mesmerized player, almost become an extension of the machine itself, while he or she competes with a computer chip.

I see that the commission has a brief tour of Del Mar Race Track scheduled for today but the tour is optional. I suggest that the tour is necessary but insufficient. I implore you to experience more, gain a deeper understanding of this industry so that you can make informed judgements.

So I have given your staff individualized lists to be sent to each of you that contain contact names, phone numbers of the NTRA race courses and the state wide breeders’ associations closest to your homes. I strongly recommend that each of you make an early morning visit and I stress early morning, to a race track, a breeding farm, or a training center. Meet people who devote their lives to this sport. Feel the beauty. You will see God’s handiwork especially if you visit during the foaling season. This is flesh and blood not neon, not green felt, not noisy jackpots, and certainly not smoke filled.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.