



TEXAS RACING COMMISSION
P.O. Box 12080
Austin, TX 78711-2080
(512) 833-6699

June 1, 2022

Office of the Governor
Legislative Budget Board

Greetings:

I write to you today to discuss the current state of the Texas Racing Commission and report on customer service input, as required by *Chapter 214, Texas Government Code*.

Following a critical review by the Sunset Advisory Commission, in 2021, the 87th Texas Legislature made the determination that the Racing Commission was not being effectively managed by certain agency executives and called for their removal via Senator Dawn Buckingham's *Senate Bill 713*. I was appointed Executive Director last fall and have been working closely with the Commission's new Chairman, Judge Robert C. Pate, named chair by Governor Abbott after last year's legislative session.

Together, Chairman Pate and I have been working to right the ship and bring the Racing Commission into a position where all Texans are reassured that this agency is operating effectively and in a transparent and accountable way. Commissioners and agency staff scheduled numerous public meetings and engagements throughout the state in the past six months to gain industry feedback on the future direction of the agency.

Given the serious concerns raised by the Sunset Advisory Commission, face-to-face feedback with agency customers and partners was an effective way to hear about the concerns they provided to the Sunset Commission, as well to determine how feedback could be used to draft this strategic plan. To that end, the Commission's Safety and Health Sub-Commission, led by Vice Chair Connie McNabb, DVM conducted field meetings at Sam Houston Race Park and Retama Park on February 2 and March 8, 2022, respectively. Dr. McNabb led public discussions with Marsha Roundtree of the Texas Horseman's Partnership and Dr. Travis Mays of the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory and welcomed the insight of interested parties.

The Commission intends to increase public input through another round of public meetings focused on modernizing the *Texas Rules of Racing* in response to Sunset Advisory Commission feedback as well as emerging standards being implemented in the United States. In May 2022, Chairman Robert C. Pate called on Dr. McNabb to review best practices in horseracing regulation from across the globe to ensure Texas remains "a premier state for horseracing."

All TXRC customers can expect to be treated courteously and fairly. The agency may be reached at info@txrc.texas.gov and found on all major Social Media platforms.

If you or your staff have any questions about this information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Amy F. Cook

Amy F. Cook
Executive Director

cc: Texas Racing Commission Commissioners