



February 12, 2025

Senator Champion
Chair, Jobs and Economic Development Committee
State Capitol
Saint Paul, Minnesota

RE: Senate File 901

Chairman Champion and Committee members,

On behalf of Canterbury Park's Board of Directors and the approximately 1,000 employees at Minnesota's only thoroughbred and quarter horse racetrack, I am writing to express our support for Senate File 901. An appropriation for a grant to Abijah's on the Backside will allow the impactful and much needed equine-experiential mental health therapy to first responders to expand the positive results the program is having.

Abijah's on the Backside operates a facility in our stable area and is integrated into the daily life of the racetrack, the summer home of more than 1,000 horses. Abijah's has the support and gratitude of Canterbury Park and the Minnesota Horsemen's Benevolent & Protective Association which represents horse owners, trainers, jockeys and more than 500 workers who care for those racehorses.

Abijah's on the Backside has made a life-saving difference for many first responders seeking healing for PTSD, addiction and other afflictions through therapy using thoroughbreds that have raced at Canterbury Park, including many that were bred in Minnesota. Abijah's also offers mental health services to backstretch workers and others in Minnesota's horse racing industry. Last year Canterbury partnered with Abijah's to host wellness retreats for police departments who were affected by line-of-duty injuries or fatalities to fellow first responders. The work performed by Abijah's on the Backside is important to our community and the entire state.

Thank you for the opportunity to share Canterbury Park's support for S.F. 901 with you. A grant to support Abijah's on the Backside will make a major difference to many first responders who risk their lives serving us as well as supporting our efforts to find second careers for our retired racehorses. Please give Senate File 901 your support.

Sincerely,

Randy Sampson
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Canterbury Park