

SB 1524 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Commerce and General Government

Action Date: 02/11/26

Action: Do pass and be referred to Finance and Revenue and to Ways and Means.

Vote: 5-0-0-0

Yeas: 5 - Drazan, Meek, Neron Misslin, Pham, Robinson

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: Revenue impact issued

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Meeting Dates: 2/4, 2/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure establishes the Horse Racing Account to support horse racing events conducted by licensed operators and on county fairgrounds in Crook County, Josephine County, Tillamook County, and Union County. The measure funds the account with three-tenths of 1 percent of the net proceeds from the Oregon State Lottery. It requires the Oregon Racing Commission to administer the account and use funds for activities that support horse racing events, including operating horse racing events, maintaining tracks and infrastructure, purchasing safety equipment, funding veterinarians, and supporting purse money and incentives. The measure becomes operative on July 1, 2027.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Diversity of cultural events in Oregon, including horse racing
- Recent changes in funding for horse racing events
- Reasons for the changes in the prevalence of horse racing
- Economic impact of horse racing events in communities

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Horse racing has been a part of fairs in Oregon since the 1800s, with several variations over the years. Oregon continues to host live horse racing through a summer racing circuit that includes meets at several county fair venues and tracks, such as Grants Pass Downs.

The Oregon Racing Commission regulates all aspects of the pari-mutuel industry in Oregon, including racing and on- and off-track wagering. The commission also regulates multi-jurisdictional account wagering hubs licensed in Oregon. By statute, wagering fees go to the state General Fund and to support racing industry activities, such as the meet in Grants Pass and the summer meets throughout the state.