

Table games are a bad deal for area horsemen

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I've been a supporter of the local horse industry all my life. It provides thousands of jobs, sustainable agriculture and keeps our county beautiful.

When I found out the current table games bill would kill the local horse industry, I got mad enough to write this letter.

This is the worst bill I've ever seen. If our legislature had passed this bill back in 1996 and given horsemen such a miniscule percentage, the Video Lottery referendum would have been soundly defeated.

The VLT bill gives horsemen \$14 per \$100 of revenue; the table games bill gives them 60 cents. That's outrageous. How are they supposed to make a living when the cost of everything keeps going up?

Back in 1996, Penn National said it was "committed to building thoroughbred racing ... we're not a casino." We thought it was sincere.

Back then it promised our taxes wouldn't go up if we voted in slots; my taxes went up 30 percent! Back then it told us a vote for video lottery was a vote for education. What did the teachers get?

I got news for everybody: they'll promise anything to get us to vote yes, but will our taxes go up again? How will our teachers benefit?

I guess Penn National has switched horses; now it's all about slots and table gambling, and (it is) leaving horse racing in the dust. That's its choice.

Our choice is clear: Vote no. Tell Charleston we don't want table gaming at the expense of our local horse industry.