

premiums to be paid would be complex and problematic for individuals who, for example, possess several horses, use a different jockey for each race, and who would be subject to potential liability for unidentified employees of a trainer or trainers. Moreover, the cost and availability of workmen's compensation insurance written by private carriers to fulfill the requirements of this legislation appear uncertain. Testimony and correspondence I have received on the bill indicated that these additional requirements may create a disincentive for owners to race their horses in Maryland.

Third, while reviewing background material on House Bill 1119, it is obvious that the accident coverage for jockeys procured through the Jockey's Guild is inadequate. Both proponents and opponents of this legislation agreed on this point at the veto hearing. This is disturbing since jockeys perform their jobs in an extremely hazardous environment where the potential exists for severe and disabling injuries. Because of this exposure, I firmly believe that enhanced protection must be designed for jockeys. However, I am convinced that this particular legislation does not represent an appropriate resolution of the problem.

It was suggested in testimony that since New York, New Jersey, and California require either by court order or regulation that owners provide workmen's compensation coverage for jockeys, Maryland, too, would escape significant adverse effects. But it is important to note that in none of those three states or in any other state is an owner required to cover jockeys and the backstretch employees of a trainer. Clearly this legislation would place Maryland at a competitive disadvantage in attracting owners, trainers, and breeders from neighboring states.

This Administration and the General Assembly have made, and I am confident will continue to make, great strides in reviving Maryland's racing industry. This legislation would reverse much of the progress we have achieved to date.

For the above reasons, I have decided to veto House Bill 1119.

Sincerely,  
Harry Hughes  
Governor

House Bill No. 1119

AN ACT concerning

Workmen's Compensation - Covered Employees