

April 14, 2009

The Honorable Martin O'Malley
Governor of Maryland

1 page via fax: [REDACTED]

Dear Governor O'Malley:

I am writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 2 million members and supporters—including thousands in Maryland—with a suggestion regarding the state's eminent domain claim on Pimlico Race Course. We'd like to work with you to turn Pimlico into the Horse Empathy Park. In addition to creating jobs, the park would convert a facility built upon cruelty where horses were used, abused, and treated as commodities into a compassionate tribute to these sensitive living beings. It would be a place where people could proudly take their kids for a lesson in empathy, rather than sneak in to place a bet and turn a blind eye to the use of performance-enhancing and pain-masking drugs and the ultimate disposal of the horses.

Horses exploited for racing weigh at least 1,000 pounds and have legs that are supported by ankles the size of a human's, yet they are forced to run around a dirt track at speeds exceeding 30 miles per hour while someone strapped to their back kicks and whips them. An average of three horses suffer catastrophic breakdowns and die on the track every day in the U.S. Many more die as a direct result of a racing injury. Countless others are injured. Very few racehorses are ever put out to pasture. Some are found wasting away or abandoned and many are sold into the horsemeat export industry, which still sends 100,000 horses every year to Canada, Mexico, and Japan for slaughter.

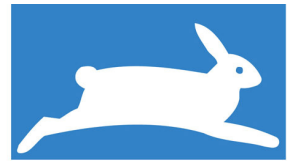
The Horse Empathy Park would feature educational displays highlighting interesting facts about horses and how almost every aspect of their nature is thwarted by the abuse inherent in the horseracing industry. It would feature a memorial to well-known horses who were raced to death, such as Barbaro and Eight Belles, and an exhibit of whips, bits, clamps, toe grabs, and spurs. And children could play games in which they race around the Pimlico track wearing a "jockey pack" that would simulate the weight and pressure a horse feels with a jockey on their backs. Each person entering the museum will be given a blinker—a hood that restricts horses' vision when they are forced to race—to wear for the duration of their visit, and they will also receive a few lashes with a whip.

Please contact me so that we can begin the planning process. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Tracy Reiman
Executive Vice President



PETA

PEOPLE FOR THE ETHICAL
TREATMENT OF ANIMALS

501 FRONT ST.
NORFOLK, VA 23510
757-622-PETA
757-622-0457 (FAX)

PETA.org
Info@peta.org

AN INTERNATIONAL
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TO PROTECTING
THE RIGHTS OF ALL ANIMALS