



**Gaming  
Commission**

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## **NYS Gaming Commission Chair Brian O'Dwyer Announces Actions to Hold Trainers Accountable for Employee Wage Issues**

At the October Public Meeting of the New York State Gaming Commission, Chairman Brian O'Dwyer spoke about concerns regarding wage issues involving prominent horse trainers, and highlighted a partnership with the New York State Department of Labor to readily identify any Commission licensees that are subjects of Labor wage-related investigations.

New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon said, "We remain dedicated to ensuring that hardworking New Yorkers receive wages they rightfully earned. I thank the New York Gaming Commission for helping to protect workers by holding horse trainers accountable and ensuring a level playing field for all."

Chairman O'Dwyer's comments, as prepared:

*"Last month, I directed our Horse Racing & Pari-Mutuel Wagering Division to examine the matter of licensed trainers owing significant back-pay to workers, including hundreds of thousands of dollars in H2-B back wages. Most trainers and workers at New York State's racetracks comply with the law. But when we learn of trainers not paying workers, we hold them accountable.*

*"For example, a trainer was recently ordered by the U.S. District Court to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars in back wages, fines and penalties. This is not the first time that this trainer and his stable have been ordered to pay back wages, damages and fines due to federal labor law violations. Accordingly, the Commission requested the trainer provide appropriate employment records as part of its review. The Commission also requested the trainer explain why he believes he continues to meet New York State's standards for licensure. We are reviewing his response.*

*"To promptly identify any licensees engaging in bad labor practices, we've forged a partnership with the NYS Department of Labor so that the Commission is notified when complaints regarding a trainer's business practices spur an investigation. This bridges the regulatory gap so that when we learn of trainers engaged in practices that shortchange their employees, we can consider action regarding the trainers' licensure.*

*"This should be fair warning to all. Just as we expect equine athletes to be treated with dignity and respect, so too we expect all who work in the industry to be treated with dignity and respect.*

*"I thank the Department of Labor and Commissioner Roberta Reardon for continuing to partner with us to protect the thousands of workers who take care of racehorses."*

Chairman O'Dwyer concluded with: "I can assure you and the general public that the Commission does not take those types of violations lightly."

[Video of Chairman O'Dwyer's Remarks](#) (2:28)

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