

April 14, 2016

Chairwoman Lois Court and Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee:

Dear Representative Court and House Finance Members,

I would like to present my opinion in person but due to a serious health condition that I am battling, I am not able to attend.

By way of introduction, I currently represent Ward VI in the City of Aurora as Council Member. Part of my ward is adjacent to Arapahoe Park Horse Track. The owners would like to expand their entertainment offerings to allow gambling. Last year, they attempted to pass Amendment 68, which failed by a large margin by the voters.

On many occasions, this group has tried to expand gambling via Instant Racing Machines (IRM), Video Lottery Terminals (VLT). This horsetrack is relatively dormant six months of the year. Landowners, homeowners and adjacent neighbors have consistently raised concern over proposals that would increase, by a large measure, activities that were never anticipated with major impacts on infrastructure, traffic, law enforcement, planning and home values.

My neighbors and I are opposed to such expansion without the requisite state and local control vote that is required under our Constitution. IRMs and VLTs qualify as a slot machine under the definition of such in our Constitution. These machines look and function as a slot machine. HB1402 simply clarifies this. It does NOT take away any vested land use rights or the ability to ask voters for expansion.

Please support HB1402 and preserve our voice in the debate of gambling expansion. The residents in Ward VI would appreciate your support.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very Sincerely,

Francoise M. Bergan
Council Member, Ward VI, City of Aurora