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Moreover, we would like to call upon the Government to look into the activities of casino junkets which are becoming extremely widespread and aggressive in Hong Kong. Although some critics suggested that those who engaged in horse race betting would not have much interests to go gaming in Macau, these junkets have in fact aimed at luring away high-value bettors from Hong Kong to bet in Macau, and members of our Association are amongst their main targets. In fact, when Hong Kong racing season is in its summer recess, some horse owners were approached by "representatives" from various casinos in Macau, who would typically provide attractively-priced holiday package to lure us to go over to Macau to gamble. This is clear evidence of the prevalence of the aggressive marketing of casino operations from Macau. Our Association has concerns about the legitimacy of these activities as they amount to explicit marketing of gambling.

As racehorse Owners, we have invested in excess of 1 billion HK dollars for over 1,000 horses in Hong Kong, but the opportunities in starting these horses are very limited to approximately once per month. For each race meeting, at approximate 70% of our horses get the chance to run and the remaining 30% will be balloted out but Owners still have to pay same training fee without getting any prize money. The additional five race meetings would definitely help to ease this traffic jam situation and give Owners a fairer chance of getting their investment return. Without continuous support from Owners, Hong Kong racing industry will decline and hence, tax revenue to government will decline.

We, racehorse Owners, always view racing as a sporting activity. In fact, the vast majority of Owners who attend races are not there just for the sake of betting. Many of us view it as an occasion for social gathering and business networking with our business partners, friends or families. We therefore do not agree with the view that the five additional racedays will result in the promotion of gambling, or will have adverse impact on our younger generation. We would also like to let you know that all advanced racing jurisdictions around the world such as UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, US, Canada and France don't have summer breaks or winter breaks in racing.

Our Association would humbly request the Home Affairs Panel to take into account our views in your deliberation of the Jockey Club's proposals.

Yours truly,

Paul Wrobel  
Vice President

C.C.: The Hon Tanya Chan, Deputy Chairman, Home Affairs Panel  
Ms. Betty Fong, Secretariat, Lego Home Affairs Panel

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