



The Horsemen's Newsletter



April 2018

Vol. 28 • Number 4

Congress Passes Bill That Could Nearly Double Available H-2B Visas

Provisions that could double the number of H-2B visas were included in an omnibus spending bill approved by Congress early in the morning of March 23 and signed by President Trump later that day, the National Thoroughbred Racing Association said.

The language in the budget bill grants the U.S. Department of Homeland Security the authority to increase the cap on H-2B visas, which are a critical component of the Thoroughbred industry's foreign temporary workforce. The Homeland Security Secretary would make the determination after discussions with the U.S. Department of Labor.

Under language in the omnibus bill, the total number of H-2B visa workers that would be permitted to enter the U.S. in fiscal 2018 would be capped at 129,547, the NTRA said. There isn't much time to capitalize on it, however, as fiscal 2018 ends Sept. 30.

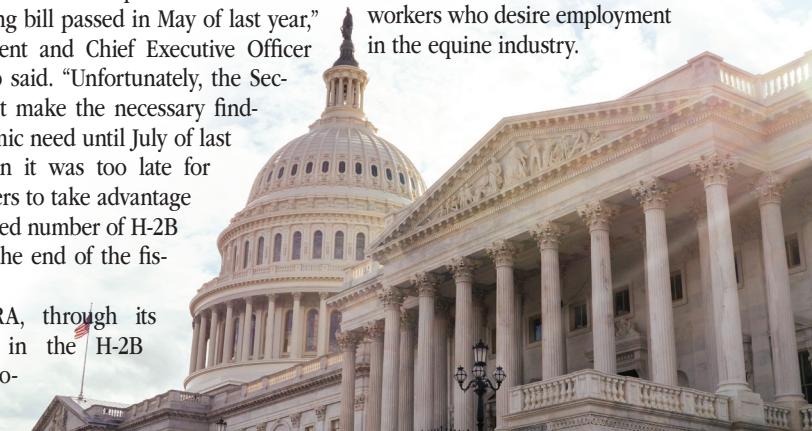
If fully implemented, the cap would be equal to the number of new and returning H-2B workers admitted to the U.S. in fiscal 2007, which is the fiscal year when the highest number of H-2B foreign temporary workers participated in the program.

"Congress provided the Secretary of Homeland Security with the same discretionary power to increase H-2B limits as part of the 2017 omnibus spending bill passed in May of last year," NTRA President and Chief Executive Officer Alex Waldrop said. "Unfortunately, the Secretary did not make the necessary finding of economic need until July of last summer when it was too late for most employers to take advantage of the increased number of H-2B visas before the end of the fiscal year."

The NTRA, through its membership in the H-2B Workforce Co-

alition, said it will "urge the (Trump) administration to swiftly implement this H-2B cap relief and will continue to encourage Congress to pass permanent H-2B cap relief."

Other industry organizations, including the THA, other horsemen's groups, and the American Horse Council continue to work in Washington, D.C., to push for broader immigration reform that would facilitate retention of foreign workers who desire employment in the equine industry.



Noah Grove Wins Gold At PyeongChang Paralympics

Eighteen-year-old Noah Grove, who had his left leg amputated below the knee when he was only 5 years old, has excelled as a sled hockey player, and his skills and dedication paid off in South Korea when he and other Team USA members captured the gold medal in the Winter Paralympic Games in March.

Grove, of Frederick, Md., is the son of Chris Grove, who won more than 680 races as a trainer based in Maryland. Team USA tied the sled hockey game with only 35 seconds in regulation and then scored a goal in sudden death to defeat the Canadian team.

Grove played in all five games with three goals and three assists.

"It's definitely a top moment in my life so far," Noah Grove said after the victory.

He was named to the Paralympic sled hockey team on Jan. 1, and previously played in the World Championship in 2017 in Gangneung, South Korea. Grove helped the U.S. win a silver medal while skating in all seven games of the series.

Grove also has skated in two World Sled Hockey Challenges and helped the U.S. team win two championships in 2016 and 2017, both times in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada.



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Non-Stakes Trainer Bonus Added To BES, Preakness Programs

The Maryland Jockey Club has added a \$50,000 bonus for trainers who accumulate the most points in all non-stakes on May 18 (Black-Eyed Susan Day) and May 19 (Preakness Day) at Pimlico Race Course.

This is in addition to the \$100,000 trainer bonus for points accrued in 15 stakes on those two days. MJC officials said the non-stakes bonus program is designed to help boost field size as well as reward local trainers who support overnight races.



qualify over the two days. First prize is \$50,000, followed by \$25,000 for second, \$12,000 for third, \$7,000 for fourth, \$4,000 for fifth and \$2,000 for sixth. Points are awarded under the same formula as the non-stakes bonus program.

Commission Adopts Update To Claiming Regulations

The Maryland Racing Commission March 22 adopted a new provision to claiming regulations that prohibit a trainer who also has an owner's license from claiming a horse as an owner while he or she is under suspension.

The new language stemmed from discussions with the MTHA and was endorsed by the MRC at a meeting last year. MRC Executive Director Mike Hopkins said the regulation must now be sent to and published in the Maryland Register, and that it would take effect by May 1.



Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Backstretch Pension Plan Registration for the year ended 2017 will take place at the following times and locations.

Please bring your MRC Badge and W-2, 1099, or tax return for 2017.

For more information call the MTHA office at (410) 902-6842.

Failure to register during these times will result in the loss of your 2017 benefit.

April 23 through April 27

Laurel Track Kitchen,
9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

April 30 through May 4

Laurel Track Kitchen,
9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

May 7 through May 11

Pimlico MTHA Office,
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Baseball Tickets Are Here

Sign up for O's or BaySox tickets in the kitchens or call Dan at (410) 802-5798.



Spring Golf Tournament

The MTHA will be having our annual Golf Tournament on Monday, April 16 at Compass Pointe in Pasadena. It will be \$65 per player. Check in time starts at 12 p.m and we will be starting the tournament at 1 p.m.

Included will be a golf cart, two free drink tickets, entry into raffles for Oriole and Bay Sox tickets, dinner and cash prizes to the top 3 teams. We will also have a contest for closest to the hole and longest drive. To reserve your spot, please contact Marty Leonard at 203-733-1367.

Spring Trips

The MTHA is in the process of planning day trips to historic Annapolis (May 8) and scenic St. Michaels (July 12) on the eastern shore. Trips will be limited to 10 backstretch workers. We would be departing for Annapolis around 10 a.m. and returning around 4 p.m. Look for details and signup sheets in the kitchen.

Softball

Pickup softball games will start after Preakness as in the past. Stay tuned for further details.

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Published by the

MTHA

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→ **Noah Grove, From Page 1 —**

Earlier this year, the world traveler also skated in Italy in the Turin Para Ice Hockey International Tournament, which Team USA won.

Grove was diagnosed with bone cancer at the age of 4, and lost his left leg at the age of 5. The Maryland racing community at the time created the "Noah Fund" to provide assistance for the child's needs, which included artificial limbs. More than \$120,000 was raised.

The Grove family was able to witness the Winter Paralympic Games in person.

"It was a great experience," said Chris Grove, who is assisting the MTHA in organizing the upcoming Groom Elite program for Maryland backstretch workers. "Our whole family went to South Korea. Most of my journey in my life has been my own, so to be able to follow Noah's is a pretty great experience."

"Team USA were the definite favorites, but the game was exciting. Once we tied it and it went to overtime, I think Canada was exhausted. Noah is the youngest member of the team, so that probably will allow him to participate in the next three Olympics."

Grove looks back fondly on the "Night for Noah" fundraiser and the impact it had on his son and the family. The project was organized by Fran Raffetto, wife of then-Maryland Jockey Club President Lou Raffetto Jr., with assistance from many others.

It was a very big help for Noah," Grove said. "It was amazing."



Open MTHA Board Meeting – February 23, 2018

Members present: Timothy L. Keefe (President), Linda S. Gaudet (Vice President), Dale Capuano (Vice President), Michael F. Horning (Treasurer), Katharine M. Voss (Secretary), A. Ferris Allen, JoAnn Hayden, R. Larry Johnson, Mark B. Lapidus, Robert T. Manfuso, Charles J. Reed and Philip B. Schoenthal.

Member absent: Hugh I. McMahon, H. Graham Motion and Michael J. Trombetta.

2018 Budget

The Board unanimously approved a comprehensive budget for MTHA for FY 2018.

Flu/Rhino Vaccination Frequency

The Board unanimously endorsed the MRC Safety Committee recommendation that calls for Flu/Rhino vaccinations to be administered every four months instead of every three months.

Turf Shoe Rule

The Board unanimously agreed to advocate to Maryland Racing Commission to revert back to the previous rule that permitted the use of dirt shoes on the turf.

South Carolina Residency Races

The Board canceled the practice of providing support for the running of South Carolina residency stakes in Maryland by a vote of 7-3.

Make Up Day - May 3, 2018

The Board unanimously approved the addition of May 3, 2018, to the live racing schedule.

Virginia Races

The Board endorsed the running of Virginia-bred races and stakes in Maryland in 2018 provided that no purse money will be furnished for the running of any Virginia race from the Purse Account (MTPA), that field size must have a minimum of seven to card any Virginia race in Maryland and MTPA receive all handle from the running of these races.

Timonium 2018 State Fair Meet

The Board eliminated the Timonium Trainer Bonus contribution to the Purse Account by a vote of 9-2. Also the Board approved the addition of a second stakes to the 2018 meet that is consistent with the funding of the 2017 Coalition Stakes as long as an open allowance race is eliminated.

Increase On Off-The-Turf

The Board unanimously authorized a 20% purse increase on off-the-turf overnight races that hold to seven or more starters that leave the paddock.

4% Increase To 5th - Last

The Board unanimously authorized all starters in all overnight dirt races that finish 5th through last, including non finishers, receiving an amount equal to 4% of the published purse in lieu of the Bonus Award.

Owner Bonus Overpayment

The Board unanimously authorized the 2017 Owner Bonus program contribution of \$3,007,203 (7.6%) notwithstanding of the 6% cap detailed in the Owner Bonus agreement.

Two Horse Races

The Board unanimously endorsed the practice of running races that scratch down to two horses.

Lasix Rule

The Board unanimously agreed to advocate to the Maryland Racing Commission that any licensed veterinarian shall be permitted to sign an affidavit to declare a horse is a bleeder and shall be permitted to return to the use of Lasix after 60 days from the horse's last start.

Free Easter Breakfast

For Maryland's Dedicated Backstretch Employees

Easter Sunday

Laurel & Pimlico Kitchens



Please join us for a fun day in a beautiful setting to support the horses and cats of Foxie G



Equines in the Vines

In Association with the ASPCA Help A Horse Day

**Sunday, April 22, 2018
from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.**

Linganore Winecellars
13601 Glissans Mill Road
Mt Airy, MD 21771

**Live Music and a
Live Broadcast from 99.9 WFRE**



HIGHLIGHTS

Photo op with retired racehorse Wilbur, saved from slaughter and now a permanent resident of Foxie G

Family and dog friendly event

Unique Vendors, Silent Auction and Wine Raffle

Moon Bounce, Corn Hole, Inflatable Pony Races

Food Available for Purchase



\$20 PER PERSON IN ADVANCE | \$25 AT THE DOOR

Includes 8 wine tastings (for those 21 and older), cheese, fruit and chocolates
Under 18 admitted for FREE with an adult

For ticket sales visit <http://www.mdtix.com/thefoxiegfoundation.html>

SPONSORSHIP AND VENDOR SPACES ARE AVAILABLE

Contact Kathy at (703) 638-2863, email to whinnywhiskers@thefoxiegfoundation.org or visit www.thefoxiegfoundation.org/equines-in-the-vines



MTHA

500 Redland Court, #105
Owings Mills, Maryland 21117

April 2018

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MTHA Golf Tournament Monday, April 16

Spring is right around the corner and that means one thing, the MTHA Spring Golf Tournament is upon us.



Compass Point G.C.
Pasadena, Maryland
Registration: Noon
Tee Off: 1 p.m.

\$65 per golfer. Contact Marty Leonard at (203) 733-1367

Board of Directors

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