

Texas senator says other states don't want approval of pari-mutuel betting

AUSTIN (AP) — A legislative sponsor of pari-mutuel betting charged Thursday that surrounding states do not want Texas to approve race track wagering and are putting up money to defeat the bill.

"We know what pari-mutuel will do to our surrounding states," Sen. H. Harris, R-Dallas, said. "They're not going to like it, that's right. They've been drawing off our population base. It's our turn."

Harris said surrounding states already allow pari-mutuel wa-

gering, are obviously spending money in Texas.

Dallas-based Texans Who Care, an anti-betting group, claims that pari-mutuel betting is a dying industry. But Rep. Lloyd Criss, D-La Marque, said the total amount wagered at tracks had risen 49 percent over the past decade.

Attendance at horse tracks last year totaled 70.5 million, making it the nation's No. 2 spectator sport, Criss said.

"That doesn't sound like an unhealthy industry to me," he said.

Also, he said, greyhound attendance has increased 131 percent in the past 20 years, and the amount wagered has gone up 511 percent. "No greyhound track in the United States is having economic trouble," Criss said.

Rep. Debra Danburg, D-Houston, said racing and wagering already are going on. "The two things that are not going on are" there is no state oversight and "we're not getting the money," she said.

Other proposed amendments are also being debated. The West

and South Texas Chambers of Commerce endorsed the pari-mutuel proposition.

The chambers also backed Referendum 1 on Tuesday's ballot, which would keep the State Board of Education an appointed body rather than having it elected.

The Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation urged voters to support Amendment 8 on the ballot, which would allow the state to sell \$500 million in bonds for prison, mental health and youth facilities.

Texas soldiers 'stay in step' with other troops at special NATO deployment of U.S. forces

FORT HOOD (AP) — Trooping across Europe in NATO training exercises, Texas soldiers stayed in step with the thousands of other soldiers, says Fort Hood commander Lt. Gen. Robbie E. Saint.

"One of the big successes that I'm proud of is that we put Killeen and Central Texas on the map," Saint said. "There aren't many people in northern West Germany that haven't heard of Fort Hood."

Reforger '87, in which nearly 78,000 international troops took part, featured a contingent of

20,000 Fort Hood soldiers and nearly 11,000 National Guardsmen and Army Reservists.

The complicated maneuvers were the largest deployment of U.S. forces to Europe since World War II. Saint said all the American soldiers came home safely, and no equipment or vehicles were lost.

"I still have about 2,000 soldiers over there, so it's not over until it's over," Saint said. "The last plane comes in Nov. 4."

Saint said that given the huge logistical task the maneuvers entailed, they went off smoothly.

"The troops performed magnificently," Saint said. "They looked professional, and they demonstrated their professional competence."

Members of the Committee for Disarmament in Europe, many of whom were from Warsaw Pact countries, visited some of the maneuvers, but not all the secrets of the NATO forces were deployed.

"I didn't show them all my cards," Saint said. "They left wondering what we can do."

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