



The race that endangers the nation

The Editor, Dear Editor, Melbourne residents have endured an interminable lockdown. There is finally light at the end of the tunnel, as we strive to avoid further lockdowns. So, why put this community sacrifice at risk, by allowing Melbourne Cup Carnival to go ahead? The Victoria Racing Club has declared that the Melbourne Cup will proceed this year, "as it has done" in previous years, and hopes to attract a crowd of up to 50,000 people. This will mean attendees ignoring social distancing as they crowd onto trains, cluster at bars, and marquees, crowd into selfies, hug friends, and scream at horses. Let's not forget the other health risks—and deaths—connected to Melbourne Cup, even in a non-pandemic year. In the last racing year, 116 horses died after being forced to run and jump on hard-packed dirt, on ankles the size of a human's. They suffered catastrophic injuries—including breaks and fractures of their forelegs—as well as cardiac issues, internal bleeding, and head trauma. This year, we craved our own liberties—while knowing there are good reasons for communal sacrifice. Let's allow the horses their freedom, and avoid the cruelty and viral transmission risks that come with racing. Instead, we can boost the economy with entertainment featuring safe social distancing and consenting human performers, like outdoor theatre, musical concerts, dance, and comedy. Desmond Bellamy Special Projects Coordinator PETA Australia 1a Henderson St Northcote VIC 3070 0411 577 416 DesmondB@PETA.org.au

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