

# Steve Gaw

Missouri

Submission Date Oct 15, 2025 11:30 PM

Candidate Name: Steve Gaw

State of Residence Missouri

Provide a short bio (250 words or less) to be used in election materials or introductions.

## STEVE GAW

Steve Gaw, an attorney, former Speaker of the Missouri House of Representatives, and former Chair of the Missouri Public Service Commission, is a Senior VP of Markets and Infrastructure for the Advanced Power Alliance. He works on RTO policy issues within the Southwest Power Pool region (which runs the electric grid in the western Midwest), a founding director and past President of the Organization of MISO States and a founding director of the SPP Regional State Committee. He has been a speaker and moderator in forums on energy policy.

As Speaker and a member of the legislature Steve passed major education, consumer protection, and criminal justice reforms.

As a commissioner on and Chair of the Missouri Public Service Commission, Steve was responsible for oversight of utilities in Missouri.

Steve is a former partner in the firm of Schirmer, Suter, and Gaw.

As Speaker, he selected the great Saddlebred trainer, Tom Bass, for the Hall of Famous Missourians. Steve's family has had horses for generations. He grew up riding in small horse shows and trail rides. He is a student of Saddlebred bloodlines and a former Board member of the Huntsville Horse Show. Steve and his wife Fannie, and their daughter Skylar live on a farm in Callaway County, Missouri where they raise American Saddlebreds. He is a member of the William Woods University Board of Directors.

Steve graduated Summa Cum Laude from Truman State University with a degree Physics and has a J.D. from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Professional Experience (check all that apply)

Legal/Law

Marketing/PR/Communications

Nonprofit

Business Owner

Engineering

Human Resources (HR)

Government/Public Sector

Customer Service

Consulting/Advisory Services

Number of years in the American Saddlebred industry:

50

How I participate in the American Saddlebred industry (check all that apply)

Owner

Exhibitor

Equine Memberships

Breeder

Committees/Councils/Volunteer (including local charter clubs, horse shows, etc.)

My greatest contributions to the American Saddlebred industry include (please list up to three statements):

1. Induction of Tom Bass into the Hall of Famous Missourians. The story of Tom Bass is one of the most beloved in the Saddlebred history. Born a slave in Boone County, Missouri, Tom rose to fame in the late 1800s and early 1900s as one of the greatest trainers in the United States. Despite having to overcome obstacles that would have seemed impossible to clear, Tom's abilities with horses, his determination, and his kindness brought him recognition from Presidents, Royalty, and household names like Will Rogers. Yet, there had been no recognition for Tom in the Capitol of Missouri. When I was Speaker of the House I was in charge of the nominations to the Hall of Famous Missourians. Tom was my first nominee. Working with others, we organized a celebration of Tom Bass's contributions, including a two-day trail ride from the Simmons Stable in Mexico, Missouri to the State Capitol in Jefferson City, Missouri. With Mrs. Weldon's help we had a Saddlebred exhibition on the lawn of the Capitol. Later that day we dedicated a bust of Tom Bass, which sits to this day on the third floor of the Capitol.

2. Written Comments to the United States Department of Agriculture on a Rulemaking misapplying the proposed rule to Saddlebreds which should have been limited to practices in certain other breeds. I worked with Bob Funkhouser and the Saddlebred Association in drafting comments to the Department of Agriculture proposed rule that addressed a proposed rule that would have inappropriately applied drafted provisions to Saddlebreds. These provisions were meant to prevent practices that are documented to exist in showing horses of certain gaited breeds, but do not exist in the Saddlebred world. These comments were filed on behalf of the Association. I also made contact individuals I knew in Washington, including a US Senator who had been supportive of the rule. The communication helped to change the Senator's view on the rulemaking. This effort as part of the contribution made by many individuals helping to change the rulemaking so that it did not apply to the Saddlebred. The implications of the rule would have had substantial negative impacts on Saddlebred shows.

3. International Research on the Sire-lines of the Saddlebred: My interest in the bloodlines of the Saddlebred and the increasing information available from DNA research in tracing ancestry. Having read about research in Europe led by Dr. Barbara Wallner at the University in Vienna, Austria for the first time tracing the sire-lines of horse breeds I reached out to her to see if she had an interest in adding the Saddlebred to her research. Dr. Wallner had been able to differentiate the sire-lines of the three foundation sires of the Thoroughbred, two of which (the Byerley Turk and the Darley Arabian) are also the sire line ancestors of the Denmark and Chief lines. Thanks to her interest and work and the help of several Saddlebred farms in the U.S., we were able to collect hair samples of descendants of both lines, confirming with DNA testing, the actual sire lines of the Saddlebred breed. A summary of the research was published in the Journal of the American Saddlebred. Dr. Wallner used this research as a part of larger research on sire lines that was later published and in a second presentation focusing on the Saddlebred breed at an international conference in Great Britain.

I want to be on the ASHBA Board of Directors because?

Like many of you, I have a lifetime of involvement with the American Saddlebred. My days growing up on a small farm in North Missouri, were woven in with these horses. My Mom and Dad raised Saddlebreds there, standing a grandson of Stonewall King and having a small band of broodmares. My first horse was an old high school mare "Sissy" given to me (really my parents since I was less than 5 at the time) by Temple Stephens, who owned WGC Easter Serenade. Growing up I spent many hours riding across trails in Missouri and in small saddle club shows. Horses were a constant part of the activity for my family. Every summer we looked forward to going to the small Saddlebred shows that still populated some of the small communities in Missouri and attending the Missouri State Fair to watch a ring full of horses and Missouri Trainers circle the old arena at the Fairgrounds.

While the show scene has changed a lot since I was growing up, my love of these horses remains. Through the years of raising young horses, watching some of them become show horses in shows across the country, and occasionally showing myself, my involvement with Saddlebreds and the people who care deeply about them has been an important part of my life. I

What I would like to accomplish most for the breed is:

want others to experience these wonderful horses in the way so many of us have. Over my career, I have worked as an elected official, state commission member, board member and officer, and attorney. My work has required an understanding of how to move policy through many diverse opinions and self-interests to listen, collaborate, and achieve common goals. I am now at a stage where I can apply this experience and knowledge to work with others to achieve the goal of growing the market for the Saddlebred horse. If chosen to be a part of the board, I will do my best to contribute to that effort so that future generations have these horses to love and appreciate as much as we do.

Those of us who love Saddlebreds have a secret, but it is a secret we cannot afford to keep. The Saddlebred is one of the most beautiful, intelligent, and athletic horses in the world. But there are far too few people that know this breed the way we do. None of us want to lose the sight of a brilliant Saddlebred thrilling a crowd under the lights while flying down the straightaway. The showring will always be the bedrock of the Saddlebred industry. The lifeblood of many professional livelihoods, the central market for breeders, and the place where the hard work and long hours and love of riding and driving are rewarded. Yet we know times have been changing for many decades. The innovation of those who recognized change in the industry who brought forward new ideas as opportunities who have helped to grow the market. The addition of new classes such as Pleasure, Park, Western, and Hunter have brought needed growth in the show world. The willingness to try new ideas that bring new owners and added markets to the fold are critical to the future. Ideas to expand to new frontiers should be encouraged. The work some are doing in using Saddlebreds in Eventing, Competitive Trail Riding, Dressage, and Hunter/Jumper competitions and other arenas can show new audiences the talent these horses possess. If we are to see this wonderful breed flourish, the market must grow beyond what it is today.

Ideas for growing new markets should not be done in a vacuum. We should learn from the mistakes and successes of other breeds in crafting strategies for future growth. Beyond new areas of competition, we should explore new opportunities for direct promotion. Sometimes this means getting the horses in places where they are noticed by non-Saddlebred audiences. Scripps-Miramar's involvement in the Rose Bowl Parade places the Saddlebred in front of millions of viewers who are not Saddlebred owners. The more Saddlebreds are seen by those who will become owners one day the better our chances that their new horse will be a Saddlebred. Saddlebred people who take their horses to other horse related activities allow new audiences see the talent of our horses and cast the breed as an option for other events and help expand the market.

If we are going to see this breed into the future, registrations need to grow. The trends of the last several years are not going to change without an expanding market for those who raise them. For many breeders, especially small breeders, the risk of losing their investment can be daunting. When I was growing up, there were farmers all across Missouri who had a Saddlebred mare or two and regularly had a couple of foals a year. If they bred to a stallion that had a good reputation there was a decent chance that they could sell the foal at weaning time. Those days have long since passed. Today raising a foal usually means investing not just in getting a foal to weaning stage, but frequently taking the offspring through training and the first show. For many that cost and risk of loss is daunting. The future of the breeding industry cannot exist with our love of the breed alone. Keeping unnecessary barriers and costs to those raising foals low are helpful. Finding incentive programs that increase the value of young horses are important. Ultimately, it is the growth in market demand that will be critical to the long term future of the breed.

If we are to see a brighter future of these wonderful horses one thing is certain. We who care about this breed must work together to make it happen. To me that means letting that common goal be our guide post. We must value that goal above disagreements on how to achieve it. Having worked in many different settings where people frequently had very divergent viewpoints, I know well how important and often challenging it can be to focus on the vision we share rather than on the differences we have. But that is what we must do in order to achieve that vision. It isn't easy. It requires listening to one another and being willing to give and take. The gift we have in this wonderful breed is too important to lose. It is up to

us to preserve and grow it so that these horses can be enjoyed by future generations.

**scan0057.jpga (002).jpg**

781.01 KB

I certify that the above information is correct and I understand the information I entered on this form will be unedited and shared with the ASHBA membership. In addition, I am willing to be included in the election process for the Board of Directors and I am willing to serve as a Director if elected.

**Lalique.jpeg**

36.85 KB