

By: Thompson

H.C.R. No. 252

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, The horse and greyhound racing industry in Texas has  
2 brought enormous economic benefits to the state's agricultural  
3 businesses and local communities over the past two decades;  
4 according to the Texas Racing Commission, the industry provides  
5 more than 36,000 jobs, \$5.5 billion in annual expenditures, \$2.5  
6 billion in annual gross product, and \$148 million in annual state  
7 revenue; and

8           WHEREAS, Even so, in recent years horse and greyhound racing  
9 in Texas has struggled to compete with other forms of  
10 entertainment; attendance at horse and dog tracks has dropped 35  
11 percent since 1998, and the amount of money wagered on races has  
12 fallen 28 percent during that period; and

13           WHEREAS, Several industry groups, including horse and dog  
14 owners and trainers and racetrack owners and workers, have  
15 expressed a desire to revitalize the industry through innovative  
16 advertising and marketing strategies and other initiatives; and

17           WHEREAS, Although the Texas Racing Commission provides  
18 regulation and oversight of the racing industry, the commission  
19 does not have the statutory authority to promote the very industry  
20 it oversees; as a result, another forum is needed to explore ways of  
21 stimulating Texas' horse and dog racing programs; now, therefore,  
22 be it

23           RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas  
24 hereby request the governor to appoint a Governor's Task Force on

1 Horse and Greyhound Racing to:

2 (1) support and promote horse and greyhound racing and  
3 breeding programs in Texas;

4 (2) review the Texas Racing Act;

5 (3) establish guidelines for increasing revenue and  
6 creating more jobs within the industry;

7 (4) improve the working and living conditions of the  
8 people who work and reside in and around the racetracks; and

9 (5) develop methods to enhance participation in and  
10 enjoyment of the sport; and, be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the members of the task force be appointed by  
12 and serve at the pleasure of the governor, who may designate one  
13 member as the chair, and that the chair be authorized to determine  
14 the times and places for the task force to meet and to designate  
15 subcommittees to address specific issues; and, be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the governor's appointments to the task force  
17 include representatives from the training and breeding industries,  
18 the business community, the regulatory community, and other experts  
19 with an interest in horse and greyhound racing and that the  
20 membership also reflect the demographic diversity of the state;  
21 and, be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the governor's office and other state agencies  
23 may provide staff and funding to assist the task force in its work  
24 and the task force may consult with individuals familiar with the  
25 racing industry and may review and consider the horse and greyhound  
26 racing industries in other states; and, be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the task force submit a full report, including

1 findings, recommendations, and possible legislation, to the  
2 governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of  
3 representatives before the convening of the 82nd Legislature on  
4 January 11, 2011; and, be it further

5       RESOLVED, That the task force be abolished not later than  
6 October 1, 2011.