**A** **JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO CREATE THE “EQUINE INDUSTRY SUPPORT MEASURES STUDY COMMITTEE” TO EXAMINE THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER GROWTH OF THE EQUINE INDUSTRY IN THIS STATE AND THE RESULTING ECONOMIC IMPACT.

Whereas, a recent survey conducted for the South Carolina Department of Agriculture by the University of South Carolina says that within the State of South Carolina there are nearly 18,000 thoroughbred and nearly 19,000 quarter horses; and

Whereas, the same study finds that the equine industry has an annual economic impact on South Carolina of approximately $1.9 billion, supporting 28,545 jobs and more than $1 billion in labor income; and

Whereas, approximately ninety‑five percent of this economic impact comes from spending by horse owners on all horse‑related goods, services, and transportation; and

Whereas, the remaining five percent of the economic impact results from business activities associated with horse‑related institutions, such as horse racing, showing, and recreational organizations; and

Whereas, the State of South Carolina has inherent and obvious interest in seeing the equine industry promoted and grown, particularly horse racing, showing and other forms of recreational horsemanship. Now, therefore,

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. (A) There is created the “Equine Industry Support Measures Study Committee” comprised of the following seven members:

(1) two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Chairman of the Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee;

(2) two members of the Senate appointed by the Chairman of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee;

(3) two members from the equine industry, with one appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and one appointed by the President of the Senate, upon the recommendation of the South Carolina Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association; and

(4) the Commissioner of Agriculture, or his designee.

(B) The committee shall:

(1) examine the details of the economic impact of the equine industry on the State of South Carolina;

(2) study the potential for equine business growth in South Carolina and steps the State could take to encourage growth;

(3) identify any barriers that exist for equine business growth in South Carolina and how to eliminate or reduce them;

(4) compare South Carolina’s incentives and barriers to other states in the Southeast as well as nationally, and determine how to make South Carolina more competitive so as to increase and eliminate as nearly as possible, loss of equine businesses;

(5) determine if the State should encourage interstate cooperation with equine facilities in nearby states; and

(6) examine any other issues that the committee determines are of interest and benefit to the equine business in South Carolina. (C) The committee shall meet as soon as practical to organize and to elect a chairman and vice chairman. The chairman and vice chairman must be legislative members of the committee elected by a majority vote of the legislative members of the committee.

(D) The committee shall issue a report to the General Assembly by March 15, 2021, providing its findings and recommendations. Upon issuance of the report, the committee is dissolved.

SECTION 2. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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