

RESOLUTION # 24

EQUINE AND HORSERACING INDUSTRY

1 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's equine sector is diverse, involving breeding, sports
2 competition, recreation, equine assisted therapy for children and adults, publicly and
3 privately owned equestrian facilities, research and development at the Rutgers Equine
4 Science Center, horseracing, and other equine and agriculturally related entities and
5 activities; and

6 **WHEREAS**, it is notable that New Jersey, whose State Animal is the horse, is home
7 to breeders of internationally recognized performance horses, especially in the growing
8 category of Sport Horse competition, and that research and education are important
9 components to the success and future of the equine industry; and

10 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey has benefited from a strong horseracing industry supported
11 by attractive purses and breeder incentive programs, and these support local breeders and
12 owners and attract out-of-state owners to train and race at our tracks and in-state facilities;
13 and

14 **WHEREAS**, legalizing sports betting was one way for track owners to increase
15 activity at their venues, and with the passage and implementation of sports betting legislation
16 there has been an increase in activity at the state's racetracks resulting in some sharing of
17 revenues to enhance purses and improve the quality of racing at New Jersey's racetracks;
18 and

19 **WHEREAS**, in 2022 there was an additional \$2 million in stakes events for New
20 Jersey-sired horses at the Meadowlands Racetrack due to the success of sports betting in
21 New Jersey; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the biggest changes have been a continued commitment by the State of
23 New Jersey to supplement purses and breeding incentive programs for Jersey Bred and Sire
24 Stakes horses, as embodied in legislation that supplies the racing and breeding programs
25 with \$20 million a year for five years (now in its fourth year) with the possibility of those

26 payments being extended if the industry meets benchmarks of increased breeding, training,
27 and other equine activities demonstrating a turnaround of the industry in the state; and

28 **WHEREAS**, since 2004, as part of revisions to the sales tax code, horse stall rental
29 has been considered a sales-taxable item, and legislation is needed to clarify that horse
30 stalls and related horse-keeping expenses should not be subject to New Jersey Sales tax;
31 and

32 **WHEREAS**, since 2009, there has been a sharp decline in the number of horse
33 farms preserved and the acreage of horse farms preserved, from 2009 when horse farms
34 made up 11 percent of the farms preserved and 8 percent of the total acres, to 2014, when
35 4.9 percent of the farms preserved were horse farms, constituting 3.9 percent of the land
36 preserved; and

37 **WHEREAS**, in addition to racehorses, New Jersey also is home to a significant
38 number of other sporting and pleasure horses, and the continued promotion of that part of
39 the sector, through the Equine Advisory Board and Rutgers Equine Science Center, is crucial
40 to maintaining a well-rounded equine sector; and

41 **WHEREAS**, in 2023, the Rutgers Equine Science Center will host the first New
42 Jersey Equine Industry Summit in 20 years, for the purpose of taking the pulse on the
43 challenges the horse industry faces and to come up with solutions to ensure its sustainability.

44 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 108th State
45 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 8-9, 2023,
46 direct the Department and the Equine Advisory Board to continue pursuing alternative
47 funding options to support the Board's mission to promote the New Jersey equine industry
48 and to support youth educational programs and equine research at the Rutgers Equine
49 Science Center.

50 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Legislature to pass, and the
51 Governor to sign, legislation to exempt from the state sales tax pursuant to the "Sales and
52 Use Tax Act" the activities of stabling a horse, pony, mule, donkey or hinny in a barn, stable

53 or other similar structure or facility by a person engaged in the business of boarding, stabling
54 or otherwise keeping or holding horses, ponies, mules, donkeys or hinnies.

55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department and other equine-related
56 interests to educate owners about responsible breeding, considering health and quality of
57 foals and plans for long-term use and outlets for horses produced.

58 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to support the Equine
59 Science Center along with the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station at Rutgers,
60 including budget and legislative funding requests to continue the cutting-edge research and
61 education of the equine industry in New Jersey and to sustain the growth of the industry in
62 the Garden State.