

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2007

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SENATE DRS55029-LG-62 (01/30)

Short Title: Equine Industry Study Funds. (Public)

Sponsors: Senator Weinstein.

Referred to:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE AGRICULTURAL
2 ADVANCEMENT CONSORTIUM TO STUDY THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF
3 THE EQUINE INDUSTRY IN NORTH CAROLINA AND DEVELOP
4 STRATEGIES TO MAXIMIZE THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THIS INDUSTRY
5 IN THE STATE.
6

7 Whereas, the 2005 economic impact study of the equine industry in the
8 United States done by the American Horse Council showed a total impact of \$101.5
9 billion: \$32 billion from recreation, \$28.8 billion from showing, \$26.1 billion from
10 racing, and \$14.7 billion from other activities; and

11 Whereas, that study ranked North Carolina 8th among the states in the number
12 of horses in the State; and

13 Whereas, the last survey of the equine industry in North Carolina was
14 undertaken by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in
15 1996; and

16 Whereas, no comprehensive study has ever been done to determine the
17 economic impact of the equine industry in the State; and

18 Whereas, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Kentucky, and other
19 states have recently conducted economic impact studies and have found that the equine
20 industry contributes substantially to each state's economy. For example, Maryland
21 determined the total economic impact of the equine industry to be \$1.5 billion dollars
22 per year, and Virginia estimated a \$1-billion-dollar impact with the Virginia Horse
23 Center in Lexington alone generating in excess of \$53 million; and

24 Whereas, a number of states also have established equine industry boards and
25 are actively recruiting equine operations and activities, including the development of
26 major horse parks in Maryland and Florida; and

1 Whereas, North Carolina is well situated as to climate, geography, and
2 transportation routes for equine operations and activities and has an opportunity to
3 increase its share of the equine industry dollar; and

4 Whereas, North Carolina was the home of Janus, the foundation sire of the
5 American Quarter Horse; and

6 Whereas, Sir Archie, considered one of the foundation sires of the American
7 Thoroughbred, lived in North Carolina during the early 1800s; and

8 Whereas, expansion of the equine industry would provide jobs, alternatives to
9 tobacco production, aid in the preservation of farmland and open space, and contribute
10 to the general welfare of the State; Now, therefore,

11 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

12 **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Rural
13 Economic Development Center, Inc., a nonprofit organization, the sum of five hundred
14 thousand dollars (\$500,000) for the 2007-2008 fiscal year to be allocated to the
15 Agricultural Advancement Consortium for the purpose of assessing the numbers,
16 composition, and value of the equine industry in North Carolina, analyzing the direct
17 and indirect impact of the industry on the State's economy, and developing a
18 comprehensive plan to maximize the economic opportunities presented by the industry.

19 **SECTION 2.** The assessment of the equine industry shall provide data on
20 both a statewide and countywide basis. The assessment shall include the following:

- 21 (1) A census of equines in the State, including numbers, breeds, and
22 disciplines.
- 23 (2) The value of equines in the State.
- 24 (3) The number of equine owners.
- 25 (4) The number of equine operations.
- 26 (5) The size of equine operations.
- 27 (6) The total acreage devoted to equine operations.
- 28 (7) The value of equine-related assets.
- 29 (8) The number of equines and owners participating in various activities
30 within the State.
- 31 (9) An analysis of the economic impact of the existing exhibition facilities
32 including the Hunt Horse Complex, the Senator Bob Martin Horse
33 Complex, the WNC Agricultural Center, and the Carolina Horse Park.
- 34 (10) An analysis of the programs, contributions, and industry support
35 provided by the North Carolina State University College of Veterinary
36 Medicine and other equine programs, at both private and public
37 education institutions including the College of Agriculture and Life at
38 North Carolina State University, Martin Community College, and St.
39 Andrews College.
- 40 (11) An analysis of the economic impact of breeding, training, and other
41 horse operations.
- 42 (12) An analysis of the economic impact of services provided to the equine
43 industry including farrier, veterinary, design and planning, farm

1 management and consulting, show management, and other services
2 related to equines and equine operations.

3 (13) An analysis of the economic impact, including manufacturing,
4 agricultural production and employment, and wholesale and retail
5 sales, of the purchase of equines, feed and grain, hay, tack and other
6 horse equipment, riding clothes, insurance, vehicles and trailers, farm
7 and pasture inputs, capital improvements such as barns, sheds and
8 fencing, and real estate, including planned equestrian communities.

9 (14) An analysis of the economic impact of other recreational uses of
10 equines, including trail riding, camping with horses, therapeutic riding
11 programs, other recreational activities, and equine-related agritourism.

12 (15) An analysis of the impact of the equine industry on State and local
13 governments including the generation of tax revenues.

14 **SECTION 3.** The Agricultural Advancement Consortium, in developing a
15 plan to maximize the economic impact of the equine industry, shall:

16 (1) Evaluate existing equine-related facilities, programs, and services in
17 the State and make recommendations for enhancing those facilities,
18 programs, and services so as to maximize their economic impact on
19 the State.

20 (2) Identify opportunities for the growth of the equine industry, including
21 the production of feed crops, improved pasture, and high quality horse
22 hays, attracting industry engaged in the production of horse-related
23 products, equipment, and pharmaceuticals, the addition of exhibition
24 and show facilities, including the development of a world-class
25 equestrian park, and other horse-related programs, activities, and
26 facilities, and evaluate the potential economic contribution to the
27 State's economy of each of these potential undertakings.

28 (3) Evaluate the need to create an equine industry board tasked with the
29 market development, education, publicity, research, and promotion of
30 the North Carolina equine industry and other such measures it deems
31 appropriate to promote the objectives, findings, and recommendations
32 of the equine industry survey and analysis.

33 (4) Evaluate the laws, rules, and policies that impact equine owners and
34 persons engaged in equine activities, including land-use policies,
35 preservation of trails, use of State recreational facilities, and tax credits
36 and make recommendations directed toward making North Carolina
37 more attractive to equine operations and activities.

38 **SECTION 4.** The Agricultural Advancement Consortium may contract with
39 other agencies of State government, any of the constituent institutions of The University
40 of North Carolina, and private consultants as it deems necessary and advisable in its
41 conduct of the assessment and plan development. The Agricultural Advancement
42 Consortium shall complete its work within 12 months of the funds becoming available
43 and shall file a report containing the results of the assessment of the equine industry and
44 its plan for maximizing the economic impact of the equine industry with the Chairs of

- 1 the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations and the Chairs of the
- 2 Senate and House Appropriations Committees.
- 3 **SECTION 5.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2007.