

RESOLUTION # 18

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**, New Jersey is home to internationally renowned performance horses,
7 especially in the field of sport horse competitors; and

8 **WHEREAS**, with New Jersey being the most densely populated state in the nation,
9 recreational riders and drivers find it increasingly difficult to find public spaces to ride; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in 2009 (a decade ago), the percentage of horse farms in the total
11 number of farms in the Farmland Preservation Program was 11 percent, and the acres on
12 those horse farms accounted for 8 percent of total acres preserved; and

13 **WHEREAS**, from 2010 to 2014, 20 horse farms were preserved, composing 4.9
14 percent of all the farms preserved in that period and covering 3.9 percent of the acreage
15 preserved during that time; and

16 **WHEREAS**, horses are defined as livestock by the Department of Agriculture, and in
17 the law that led to the creation of the Humane Standards for the Treatment of Livestock
18 (N.J.A.C. 2:8) and therefore should be treated as livestock as it relates to state laws; and

19 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's horse industry also helps sustain multiple supporting
20 economic factors, such as hay and grain producers, equine-equipment dealers,
21 veterinarians, blacksmiths and others who work in the horse industry; and

22 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's equine sector would be better positioned to compete with
23 similar businesses in surrounding states if New Jersey adopted certain policies and laws
24 aimed at improving that competitive position; and

25 **WHEREAS**, measures have been advanced in the Legislature (S2992/A4810) to re-
26 establish the state’s support for the horseracing industry by providing \$20 million per year for
27 a five-year period, support which has been made possible in large part by the state, including
28 two of its three horseracing venues, establishing legal sports betting for the first time; and

29 **WHEREAS**, horse boarding operators are a major part of New Jersey’s agriculture,
30 as their operations contribute to a continuation of open space, which enhances the overall
31 quality of life for New Jersey residents; and

32 **WHEREAS**, according to a 2014 study by the Rutgers Equine Science Center into
33 the comparative health of New Jersey’s horseracing sector, the inclusion of additional betting
34 options at racetracks in Pennsylvania and New York, and the lack of such options in New
35 Jersey, has placed New Jersey’s horseracing industry at a competitive disadvantage, leading
36 to a loss of breeders and a reduction in racing days that could, over the long-term, lead to a
37 reduction in equine support services and industries in the state, which also would affect the
38 pleasure-horse industry; and

39 **WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Equine Advisory Board, with its panel of 48 members,
40 representing 16 breed groups and additional agricultural organizations, has as one of its
41 main functions the charge to recommend horse breeding and development programs to the
42 State Board of Agriculture.

43 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that we, the delegates to the 104th State
44 Agricultural Convention, assembled in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on February 6-7, 2019,
45 direct the Department and the Equine Advisory Board to continue pursuing alternative
46 funding options to support the Board’s mission to promote the New Jersey equine industry
47 and to support youth educational programs and equine research at the Rutgers Equine
48 Science Center.

49 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Legislature to pass and the
50 Governor to sign pending legislation (S2992/A4810) to provide \$20 million per year for five
51 years to the state’s horseracing industry.

52 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Legislature to pass and the
53 Governor to sign legislation to exempt from the state sales tax pursuant to the “Sales and
54 Use Tax Act” the activities of storing a horse, pony, mule, donkey or hinny in a barn, stable
55 or other similar structure or facility by a person engaged in the business of boarding, stabling
56 or otherwise keeping or holding horses, ponies, mules, donkeys or hinnies.

57 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we support legislation to exempt from the New
58 Jersey state sales tax pursuant to the “Sales and Use Tax Act” the activities of maintaining or
59 providing services to a horse, pony, mule, donkey or hinny.

60 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we urge the Department to pursue all avenues to
61 improve the marketing and enhancement of equine breeder programs, activities and events
62 in New Jersey.