

Establishing a governor's task force to study horse and greyhound racing

HCR 252 by Thompson (Averitt)

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DIGEST: HCR 252 would have requested that the governor appoint a task force on horse and greyhound racing to:

- support and promote horse and greyhound racing and breeding in Texas;
- review the Texas Racing Act;
- establish guidelines for increasing revenue and creating more jobs in the industry;
- improve the working and living conditions of those who work and reside in and around racetracks; and
- develop ways to enhance participation and enjoyment in the sport.

The task force would have been appointed by the governor and would have had to include representatives of the training and breeding industries, business community, regulatory community, and other experts with an interest in horse and greyhound racing. The task force membership would have had to reflect the demographic diversity of Texas. The task force would have been required to report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the House, and would have been abolished October 1, 2011.

GOVERNOR'S REASON FOR VETO:

“House Concurrent Resolution 252 is a formal request by the 81st Legislature to create a Governor’s Task Force on Horse and Greyhound Racing to promote and support racing and breeding programs in the state. Several of the responsibilities assigned to the task force in this resolution are already handled by the Texas Racing Commission (TRC). Other responsibilities, including review of the Texas Racing Act, are the duty of the Sunset Commission.

“TRC already has the power to regulate ‘all persons and things relating to the operation of [race] meetings,’ so there is no reason to create a new task force that would duplicate recommendations for this industry. The industry will continue to develop ways to promote racing and breeding in the state without further government bureaucracy.

“Although the legislature failed to pass legislation during the regular session to continue TRC, I will be calling the legislature back into special session to address the continuation of this and other state agencies before their sunset date. Therefore, I direct TRC, in conjunction with private industry, to fulfill the intentions of this resolution by studying the current state of horse and greyhound racing and breeding in Texas and making appropriate recommendations for the industry.”

RESPONSE: Neither **Rep. Senfronia Thompson**, the bill’s author, nor **Sen. Kip Averitt**, the bill’s sponsor, had a comment on the veto.