



Recognizing California Chrome

This past month, with assistance and coordination from CTBA Lobbyist Robyn Black, the California legislature voted to approve a resolution to recognize California Chrome and his connections on their accomplishments in this year's Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes. The resolution spotlights California's Thoroughbred breeding and racing industry, which this year showcased to the world that California-bred horses can compete with and excel against horses from all over the nation. There were standing ovations in both the Senate and Assembly; many legislators requested pictures with the owners along with the Derby and Preakness trophies. Below is the resolution as voted on and approved into the legislature:

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 161

June 11, 2014

ACR 161, as amended, Logue.
California Chrome: thoroughbred horse racing.

This measure would recognize the outstanding performance of California Chrome during his remarkable run for thoroughbred horse racing's Triple Crown, and, in particular, for his tremendous victories in the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness Stakes, would recognize and congratulate the many Californians who are part of the ownership group, breeding and training cadre, and other essential elements that led to his success, and would recognize the storied history of thoroughbred horse racing in California, the Cal-bred Program, and its contributions to job creation and the state's economy.

WHEREAS, California has a long and proud thoroughbred racing history, dating back some 160 years. In particular, the Central Valley has been the birthplace of champions since the 1880s. California Chrome, born and raised at Harris Farms in Coalinga, continues that tradition and has become an outstanding representative of his namesake state; and

WHEREAS, California horse racing today accounts for an estimated 50,000 jobs, 148,000 thoroughbred horses, and a \$2.5 billion impact on the state's economy. Combining athleticism, grace, beauty, and speed, this sport reaches millions of fans worldwide and carries priceless positive impressions of what California has to offer; and

WHEREAS, The Kentucky Derby is the world's most famous horse race and part of the celebrated Triple Crown of thoroughbred horse racing for three-year-old horses only. Along with the Preakness and Belmont Stakes, these three classics are the races that horse owners, breeders, trainers, and jockeys all dream of winning; and

WHEREAS, This spring, California Chrome won the 140th Kentucky Derby and 139th Preakness Stakes, the first time a California-bred colt swept the first two legs of the Triple Crown. Both victories ended lengthy droughts for the state's racing industry. California Chrome became the fourth California-born Derby winner and first since 1962 and California's fifth Preakness winner and first since 1986; and

WHEREAS, It takes a very special horse to reach national prominence by winning multiple races at multiple tracks across the country. In his career so far, California Chrome has won races at California's Hollywood Park, Del Mar, and Santa Anita Park, in addition to Kentucky's Churchill Downs and Maryland's Pimlico Race Course at distances from 4½ furlongs to 1¼ miles; and

WHEREAS, Among California Chrome's eight career victories there was a six-stakes win streak featuring such milestones as the King Glorious Stakes, the final stakes event held at Hollywood Park, and the \$1 million Santa Anita Derby as well as the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness Stakes; and

WHEREAS, California Chrome, a chestnut-colored horse as golden as his home state, transcended thoroughbred horse racing to become an international phenomenon not just with his brilliant speed and winning ways, but due to his heart-warming story and the people who make up his team; and

WHEREAS, California is a state where people are unafraid to dream big and that's in part what inspired four fans to cross over into horse ownership and become first-time breeders. An inspiration to the "little guys" everywhere, Perry and Denise Martin of Yuba City and Steve and Carolyn Coburn of Topaz Lake, Nevada, became partners in a mare, Love the Chase, who they bought from a syndicate for \$8,000. After someone scoffed at their perceived foolishness, the couples named their new venture "Dumb Ass Partners (D.A.P.) Racing"; and

WHEREAS, The partners sent their lone mare to Harris Farms to be bred and chose the stallion Lucky Pulpit, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Larry Williams. California Chrome is Love the Chase's first foal. Before the colt was born, Steve Coburn vividly dreamed about the big chestnut colt with four white legs and distinctive blaze and felt sure the newborn was destined for greatness; and

WHEREAS, After a difficult birth, the mare was nursed back to health by the excellent and attentive veterinary staff at Harris Farms. This hands-on care also imprinted a love for people on her intelligent and precocious son nicknamed "Junior." Developing his mind and body, California Chrome spent his first two years at Harris Farms, where he was groomed to be a racehorse; and

WHEREAS, When it came time to start racing, the partners sent their only racehorse to trainer Art Sherman with the proclamation that this was "his Derby horse" and a suggested road map of races to qualify. Sherman's prior Derby experience was as the exercise rider for California-bred 1955 Kentucky Derby winner Swaps. Coincidentally, California Chrome is Swaps' great-great-great grandson; and

WHEREAS, California Chrome, as he prepared for the Triple Crown trail, gained his foundation and experience in the lucrative Golden State Series for Cal-bred horses, confirming the value and significance of the state's breeding program; and

WHEREAS, Art Sherman, at 77 years of age, became the oldest trainer to win the Kentucky Derby. California Chrome also became the first Derby and Preakness winner trained at Los Alamitos Race Course in Cypress, California; and

WHEREAS, Success is the result of teamwork and California Chrome's campaign is no exception. Jockey Victor Espinoza guided the colt to those six straight stakes wins. Assistant trainer Alan Sherman served as his father's right-hand man and accompanied their Triple Crown candidate for six weeks on the road; and

WHEREAS, Groom Raul Rodriguez became California Chrome's constant companion, attending to his every need. Exercise rider Willie Delgado made sure the colt paid attention to his morning lessons; and

WHEREAS, California Chrome's Triple Crown bid fell short when he injured a hoof at the start of the 146th Belmont Stakes, yet valiantly finished tied for fourth only 1¾ lengths from victory. That loss did not diminish his amazing accomplishments; and

WHEREAS, In any sport, it takes an extraordinary athlete to become a household name. California Chrome joined a short list of such equine superstars as Seabiscuit and Secretariat with cross-over appeal and the ability to make new fans as evidenced by his thousands of "Chromies"; and

WHEREAS, California Chrome became, as Art Sherman said, a "California rock star" and the latest example that California dreams can come true; and

WHEREAS, California Chrome's grit, determination, and heart carried him far beyond this state; it made California Chrome "America's horse"; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring, That the Legislature recognizes the outstanding performance of California Chrome during his remarkable run for thoroughbred horse racing's Triple Crown, and, in particular, for his tremendous victories in the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness Stakes; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature recognizes and congratulates the many Californians who are part of the ownership group, breeding and training cadre, and other essential elements that led to the success of California Chrome; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature recognizes the storied history of thoroughbred horse racing in California, the Cal-bred Program, and its important contributions to job creation and the state's economy that result from a vibrant California thoroughbred horse racing industry; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

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