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CTBA LOBBYIST

OPTIMISM FOR THE NEW LEGISLATIVE YEAR

The 2015-16 legislative session began before the new year with more than 35 new members sworn into office and the introduction of a brand new Internet poker bill. Most observers of gaming interests in the Capitol believe that 2015 will be the year legislators finally pass a bill or that a standoff may be reached with tribal interests that are more opposed to racing than obtaining their own license for this new form of gaming.

The first new bill introduced on gaming is AB 9 by Assemblyman Mike Gatto (D-Silver Lake.) The bill is very similar to the language put forth by the 13 tribes last June, and in its present form the bill excludes horse racing. The bill does require new gamers to sign up initially at a brick and mortar establishment prior to play, but it is otherwise the same language previously proposed by the tribes. We will continue to work with this author and others as the new session begins. We expect to see a bill authored by Assemblyman Reggie Jones-Sawyer and possibly a Senate bill before the deadline for bill introduction.

The California Thoroughbred Breeders Association and our racing partners are also working very closely with the new gaming coalition announced this fall, which includes Morongo, San Manuel, Bicycle, Commerce, and Hawaiian Gardens Casinos and Amaya Gaming (formerly known as Poker Stars.) It is our expectation that this new coalition will introduce a bill in January that will include horse racing, and we will work together over the objections of the tribes opposed to the "bad actors" provisions and to racing. CTBA will work together with our membership to educate legislators on the importance of racing and breeding Thoroughbreds as well as the economic and



Assembly members made a visit to see California Chrome in December

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employment numbers we contribute each year to the state.

Our continuing efforts to educate legislators have been the key to our success over the past four years. One might look at the failure to pass an Internet poker bill as a setback; the reality is that we have been tremendously successful in blocking any bill that does not include racing and

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only allows tribes and card rooms. This effort is critical to our future.

A special thanks to Brad McKenzie and Los Alamitos for helping CTBA and the Thoroughbred Owners of California host four legislators and their families in late December. Assembly members Katcho Achadjian, (R-San Luis Obispo) Travis Al-

len (R-Huntington Beach) and new members William Brough (R-Dana Point) and Matthew Harper (R-Huntington Beach) were all on hand to watch the King Glorious Stakes Dec. 14, as well as make a special visit to meet a very special California-bred in the barn of trainer Art Sherman. Thank you to all the connections of California Chrome for making their first visit to the track so memorable, and special thanks to Terry Lovingier for helping host the legislators and their families.

Lastly, the new Chairs of the Governmental Organization Committee were announced in late December, and we are pleased to announce that two great friends of the CTBA will now guide the policy hands of racing's future. Congratulations to two of our biggest supporters, Assemblyman Adam Gray (D-Merced) and Sen. Isadore Hall III (D-Compton). We look forward to working with these two outstanding legislators this year on issues important to racing. We have much work ahead, but our future looks bright. **CTB**