

Date of Hearing: May 3, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

Adam Gray, Chair

ACR 63 (Gray) – As Introduced April 18, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Horse racing

**SUMMARY:** Would recognize the careers of jockey, Michael Earl Smith, and racehorse, Arrogate, and would recognize the history and importance of Thoroughbred racing in California. Specifically, **this Resolution makes the following findings:**

- 1) California has been a world leader in producing and training some of the best horses in history, dating back about 160 years, and is also home to world-class jockeys, trainers, breeders, owners, and many others who work in horse racing behind the scenes; and
- 2) 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, and reaches fans worldwide by combining athleticism, strength, grace, and speed; and
- 3) Michael Earl "Mike" Smith was born on August 10, 1965, in Roswell, New Mexico and has been one of the leading riders in United States Thoroughbred horse racing since the early 1990s. The son of a jockey, Smith began riding races in his native New Mexico at 11 years of age, took out a jockey's license at 16 years of age in 1982, and left New Mexico the following year, riding mostly in the Midwest where he earned his apprenticeship at Canterbury Downs, Minnesota before moving to New York in 1989.
- 5) In 1991, Mike Smith became one of the few American jockeys to win a European classic by claiming victory in the Irish 2,000 Guineas aboard Fourstars Allstar.
- 6) Mike Smith was the leading jockey in New York from 1991 to 1993, inclusive, with 330, 297, and 313 wins, respectively, and in 1993, he set a North American record for stakes wins in a year with 62. Among his highlights were a win in the Preakness aboard Prairie Bayou and a successful defense of the Breeders' Cup Mile aboard Lure.
- 7) In 1994, Mike Smith broke his own record for stakes wins with 68, 20 of them Grade I races and several of them while riding that year's Eclipse Award for Horse of the Year winner, Holy Bull; and was voted the Mike Venezia Memorial Award for "extraordinary sportsmanship and citizenship" in 1994, received the Eclipse Award as Outstanding Jockey in 1993 and 1994, and the ESPY Award for Top United States Jockey in 1993; and
- 8) In 2000, Mike Smith moved his home base from New York to Southern California, and was voted the prestigious George Woolf Memorial Jockey Award that honors a rider whose career and personal conduct exemplifies the very best of participants in the sport of Thoroughbred horse racing.
- 9) In 2002, he served as the regular rider for Horse of the Year, Azeri, riding Azeri to a win in the Breeders' Cup Distaff, and today remains the all-time leader for the most Breeder's Cup wins and more than 5,350 career wins.

10) In 2003, Mike Smith was inducted into the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame.

11) Mike Smith rode the sensational Zenyatta to 16 straight victories of a 19-for-20 career that saw her become the only horse to win two different Breeders' Cup races and the richest female racehorse with earnings of \$7,304,580. During her legendary career, Zenyatta won 17 graded stakes races including 13 Grade I events. She was considered by many to be possibly the greatest racehorse the world has ever seen.

12) Mike Smith has won a total of 25 Breeders' Cup races and five international races.

13) Mike Smith rode Arrogate, racing's all-time leading earner with \$17,084,600, to a sensational win in the \$10 million Dubai World Cup (G1) on March 25, 2017, and rode winners of five American Classic races including the 50-1 longshot Giacomo in the 2005 Kentucky Derby.

14) Mike Smith has demonstrated a lifelong commitment to advancing the rights of his fellow riders. He serves on the Board of Directors of the Jockeys' Guild, the union of professional jockeys, and has been a member of the organization since he began his riding career.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** None

**COMMENTS:**

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

None on file

**Opposition**

None on file

**Analysis Prepared by:** Eric Johnson / G.O. / (916) 319-2531