

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2007**

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**HOUSE BILL 204**

Short Title: Equine Industry Study Funds. (Public)

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Sponsors: Representatives Pierce; Faison, Underhill, Walend, E. Warren, Williams,  
and Yongue.

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Referred to: Appropriations.

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February 15, 2007

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1  
2 AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS TO THE AGRICULTURAL  
3 ADVANCEMENT CONSORTIUM TO STUDY THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF  
4 THE EQUINE INDUSTRY IN NORTH CAROLINA AND DEVELOP  
5 STRATEGIES TO MAXIMIZE THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THIS INDUSTRY  
6 IN THE STATE.

7       Whereas, the 2005 economic impact study of the equine industry in the  
8 United States done by the American Horse Council showed a total impact of \$101.5  
9 billion: \$32 billion from recreation, \$28.8 billion from showing, \$26.1 billion from  
10 racing, and \$14.7 billion from other activities; and

11       Whereas, that study ranked North Carolina 8<sup>th</sup> among the states in the number  
12 of horses in the State; and

13       Whereas, the last survey of the equine industry in North Carolina was  
14 undertaken by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in  
15 1996; and

16       Whereas, no comprehensive study has ever been done to determine the  
17 economic impact of the equine industry in the State; and

18       Whereas, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Kentucky, and other  
19 states have recently conducted economic impact studies and have found that the equine  
20 industry contributes substantially to each state's economy. For example, Maryland  
21 determined the total economic impact of the equine industry to be \$1.5 billion dollars  
22 per year, and Virginia estimated a \$1-billion-dollar impact with the Virginia Horse  
23 Center in Lexington alone generating in excess of \$53 million; and

24       Whereas, a number of states also have established equine industry boards and  
25 are actively recruiting equine operations and activities, including the development of  
26 major horse parks in Maryland and Florida; and

1           Whereas, North Carolina is well situated as to climate, geography, and  
2 transportation routes for equine operations and activities and has an opportunity to  
3 increase its share of the equine industry dollar; and

4           Whereas, North Carolina was the home of Janus, the foundation sire of the  
5 American Quarter Horse; and

6           Whereas, Sir Archie, considered one of the foundation sires of the American  
7 Thoroughbred, lived in North Carolina during the early 1800s; and

8           Whereas, expansion of the equine industry would provide jobs, alternatives to  
9 tobacco production, aid in the preservation of farmland and open space, and contribute  
10 to the general welfare of the State; Now, therefore,

11 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

12           **SECTION 1.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Rural  
13 Economic Development Center, Inc., a nonprofit organization, the sum of five hundred  
14 thousand dollars (\$500,000) for the 2007-2008 fiscal year to be allocated to the  
15 Agricultural Advancement Consortium for the purpose of assessing the numbers,  
16 composition, and value of the equine industry in North Carolina, analyzing the direct  
17 and indirect impact of the industry on the State's economy, and developing a  
18 comprehensive plan to maximize the economic opportunities presented by the industry.

19           **SECTION 2.** The assessment of the equine industry shall provide data on  
20 both a statewide and countywide basis. The assessment shall include the following:

- 21           (1) A census of equines in the State, including numbers, breeds, and  
22 disciplines.
- 23           (2) The value of equines in the State.
- 24           (3) The number of equine owners.
- 25           (4) The number of equine operations.
- 26           (5) The size of equine operations.
- 27           (6) The total acreage devoted to equine operations.
- 28           (7) The value of equine-related assets.
- 29           (8) The number of equines and owners participating in various activities  
30 within the State.
- 31           (9) An analysis of the economic impact of the existing exhibition facilities  
32 including the Hunt Horse Complex, the Senator Bob Martin Horse  
33 Complex, the WNC Agricultural Center, and the Carolina Horse Park.
- 34           (10) An analysis of the programs, contributions, and industry support  
35 provided by the North Carolina State University College of Veterinary  
36 Medicine and other equine programs, at both private and public  
37 education institutions including the College of Agriculture and Life at  
38 North Carolina State University, Martin Community College, and St.  
39 Andrews College.
- 40           (11) An analysis of the economic impact of breeding, training, and other  
41 horse operations.
- 42           (12) An analysis of the economic impact of services provided to the equine  
43 industry including farrier, veterinary, design and planning, farm

1 management and consulting, show management, and other services  
2 related to equines and equine operations.

3 (13) An analysis of the economic impact, including manufacturing,  
4 agricultural production and employment, and wholesale and retail  
5 sales, of the purchase of equines, feed and grain, hay, tack and other  
6 horse equipment, riding clothes, insurance, vehicles and trailers, farm  
7 and pasture inputs, capital improvements such as barns, sheds and  
8 fencing, and real estate, including planned equestrian communities.

9 (14) An analysis of the economic impact of other recreational uses of  
10 equines, including trail riding, camping with horses, therapeutic riding  
11 programs, other recreational activities, and equine-related agritourism.

12 (15) An analysis of the impact of the equine industry on State and local  
13 governments including the generation of tax revenues.

14 **SECTION 3.** The Agricultural Advancement Consortium, in developing a  
15 plan to maximize the economic impact of the equine industry, shall:

16 (1) Evaluate existing equine-related facilities, programs, and services in  
17 the State and make recommendations for enhancing those facilities,  
18 programs, and services so as to maximize their economic impact on  
19 the State.

20 (2) Identify opportunities for the growth of the equine industry, including  
21 the production of feed crops, improved pasture, and high quality horse  
22 hays, attracting industry engaged in the production of horse-related  
23 products, equipment, and pharmaceuticals, the addition of exhibition  
24 and show facilities, including the development of a world-class  
25 equestrian park, and other horse-related programs, activities, and  
26 facilities, and evaluate the potential economic contribution to the  
27 State's economy of each of these potential undertakings.

28 (3) Evaluate the need to create an equine industry board tasked with the  
29 market development, education, publicity, research, and promotion of  
30 the North Carolina equine industry and other such measures it deems  
31 appropriate to promote the objectives, findings, and recommendations  
32 of the equine industry survey and analysis.

33 (4) Evaluate the laws, rules, and policies that impact equine owners and  
34 persons engaged in equine activities, including land-use policies,  
35 preservation of trails, use of State recreational facilities, and tax credits  
36 and make recommendations directed toward making North Carolina  
37 more attractive to equine operations and activities.

38 **SECTION 4.** The Agricultural Advancement Consortium may contract with  
39 other agencies of State government, any of the constituent institutions of The University  
40 of North Carolina, and private consultants as it deems necessary and advisable in its  
41 conduct of the assessment and plan development. The Agricultural Advancement  
42 Consortium shall complete its work within 12 months of the funds becoming available  
43 and shall file a report containing the results of the assessment of the equine industry and  
44 its plan for maximizing the economic impact of the equine industry with the Chairs of

- 1 the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations and the Chairs of the  
2 Senate and House Appropriations Committees.  
3           **SECTION 5.** This act becomes effective July 1, 2007.