

1010 Hurley Way, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95825  
(916) 263-6000  
Fax (916) 263-6042

**CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD**

12235 Beach Blvd., Suite 7  
Stanton, CA 90680  
(714) 890-7001  
Fax (714) 890-7006  
Contact:  
Mike Marten  
(714) 890-7004  
Cell: (714) 240-1870

CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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**INGRID FERMIN NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

INGLEWOOD, CA – California’s racing commissioners on Thursday named Ingrid Fermin, a racing steward since 1981, to become executive director of the California Horse Racing Board following the scheduled retirement of Roy Wood at the end of the year.

CHRB Chairman John Harris announced the selection of Fermin when the Board reconvened its regular monthly meeting following a closed executive session.

“She has a great background in racing and I’m looking forward to working with her,” said Harris, who thanked Commissioners Jerry Moss and Marie Moretti for working on the search and screening committee.

Commissioner Richard Shapiro voiced his respect for the other two finalists for the position, CHRB Senior Auditor John Reagan and California Thoroughbred Breeders Association President Daniel Schiffer, and then indicated that Fermin “will be a huge help to us dealing with current problems. I urge everyone to give her your support and to help move the industry forward.”

Fermin, 63, has a degree in humanities from the University of California at Berkeley and was an educator until she decided to pursue a career in the horse-racing industry. She attended the Jockey Club’s school for racing officials. She became the first female steward in California in 1981. Accredited as a steward by the Association of Racing Commissioners International, she has served on the prestigious Southern California thoroughbred circuit since 1991. She is a certified mediator and a specialist in the area of intervention and addiction. She is married to Buzz Fermin, a veteran horseshoer on the southern circuit. They have three children and four grandchildren.

Fermin said her job would involve “troubleshooting” and dealing with serious matters facing the CHRB. She cited “medication issues” as one of her principal concerns.

“I will help ensure a level playing field for everyone,” she explained. “Some of this involves the same responsibilities as those of a good steward – making sure that sanctions are consistent and that everyone is treated fairly and the same.”

Fermin said she will maintain her residence in Del Mar and will travel to the headquarters office in Sacramento and to all of the racing facilities in the state.

“I will begin by spending as much time as necessary at headquarters to get to know the staff, familiarize myself with the office, and plan my next steps,” she explained. “Fortunately, the CHRB has an excellent staff in Sacramento, including (Assistant Executive Director) Roy Minami, who has served twice as acting executive director, and (Director of Administration) Paige Noble. They will free me to spend much of my time at the racetracks.

“My desire is to bring everyone together. That means visiting and spending time at every track, every breed, every fair. I’m looking forward to increasing the presence of the executive director at all racing locations.”

Fermin could assume her new duties as early as January 1. However, the position of CHRB executive director has a peace officer status, which requires a background check and other reviews that might cause a delay.

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