

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

**CALIFORNIA HORSE RACING BOARD**

Los Alamitos Race Course  
4961 E. Katella Avenue  
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Contact: Mike Marten  
(714) 820-2748  
Cell: (714) 240-1870  
Fax (714) 821-6232

CHRB NEWS RELEASE

MARCH 9, 2006

**LEGISLATION IN WORKS FOR 'POLYTRACK' FUNDING**

SACRAMENTO, CA – With the California Horse Racing Board poised to require the state's major thoroughbred racetracks to install Polytrack-like surfaces in order to reduce injuries to horses and riders, California Senator Dean Perez is developing legislation to address the issue of funding for the new racing surfaces.

Senator Florez and CHRB Chairman Richard B. Shapiro have had numerous discussions about Polytrack and the need to better protect racehorses, which are suffering serious injuries at an alarming rate. Synthetic, polymer-based surfaces are considered safer than the traditional organic-based surfaces in use today.

The racing commissioners voted last month to begin the regulatory process to require any track that operates four weeks or more of continuous thoroughbred racing in any calendar year to install a polymer-type surface before the end of next year. The proposed rule will be noticed to the public for 45 days, and then the Board will conduct a public hearing before taking final action.

Senator Florez, who is chairman of the Senate Governmental Organization Committee, has demonstrated considerable interest in the horse-racing industry, not only relating to Polytrack but also Advance Deposit Wagering and other significant issues. He indicated the Polytrack funding legislation is a "high priority" for him. He is working with the CHRB and the industry on the details for what will be SB 1805.

"The installation of Polytrack is one of many long-term steps needed to ensure that we have a healthy and prosperous racing industry in California," said Senator Florez. "I'm committed to developing a sensible funding mechanism that will accelerate its introduction in our state."

"The California Horse Racing Board has many functions in regulating a complex industry," explained Shapiro. "I personally believe one of the Board's most important functions is to protect the health and safety of horses, jockeys, and all of the industry's participants. There is strong evidence suggesting that using new technology to improve our racing surfaces will make them safer for horses and riders. We also feel these surfaces will increase field size and help improve our racing product. I would hope that all racing participants and fans alike would support our efforts to do what is necessary to accomplish these important goals."

Meanwhile, two meetings have been scheduled by an ad hoc committee the Board created December 1 to gather information and address any concerns related to synthetic racing surfaces. Representatives of Keeneland Race Course will provide a full briefing and answer questions pertaining to Polytrack at the first of those meetings on March 21 at Santa Anita Park.

Polytrack is a blend of fibers, recycled rubber, and silica sand covered with a wax coating. It is installed on top of a vertical drainage system. Keeneland installed Polytrack on the training track in 2004 and is scheduled to convert the main oval to Polytrack this summer.

The second meeting, to be held April 4 at Santa Anita, will be with trainer Michael Dickinson, who developed the state-of-the-art Tapeta Farm training center in Maryland in 1998. Dickinson created and patented the all-weather Tapeta surface, which also consists of sand, rubber, and fiber all coated with wax.

Shapiro is hopeful that owners and trainers will attend both meetings, so that any and all questions and concerns they may have can be addressed and taken into consideration.

#