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CHRB NEWS RELEASE

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LEONARD FOOTE WAS CHRB EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SACRAMENTO, CA – Leonard Foote, who served as chief investigator and then executive director of the California Horse Racing Board for a total of 24 years until his retirement in 1990, passed away at the age of 79 on Monday in Reno, Nevada, after a long illness.

During his years of public service, Foote gained so much respect among his colleagues in regulatory bodies throughout North America that even today – 20 years after his retirement – the Association of Racing Commissioners International (RCI) still presents the “Len Foote Award” each year to an executive director who has been nominated and selected by his peers for outstanding service in the advancement of integrity in racing and pari-mutuel wagering.

Foote joined the CHRB as chief investigator in 1966 after serving with the California Highway Patrol from 1958 to 1965 as a traffic officer/traffic sergeant. Ten years later he was named executive secretary of the Board – a title that was later changed to executive director. In this position, Foote was responsible for all CHRB operations and the regulation of the California horse-racing industry.

Upon his retirement, Foote received a resolution from the Board crediting him with being “instrumental in developing and carrying out innumerable policies during the rapid expansion and growth of horse racing in California, such as the instant licensing program, controlled medication program, the computerized California Horse Racing Information System, simulcast wagering, and regulating gaming on Indian lands.”

Kirk Breed, the current CHRB executive director, who as senior consultant to the Assembly Governmental Organization Committee in the 1980s worked with Foote on horse-racing issues, said that Foote’s “biggest impact was on satellite wagering. That was a time of explosive growth in satellite wagering, and Len was a major contributor to that effort. He wrote all of the rules and regulations that allowed us to implement satellite wagering in an orderly way.”

Foote is survived by his wife of 56 years, Joan; their three children, Robin Coons, Bradley Foote, and Jill Mischo; six grandchildren and one great-granddaughter; three sisters, Laura Horn, Barbara Fletcher, and Alice Nemeth, and his brother, John Foote. Services will be determined at a later time.

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