

(H.B. 2182)  
(Conference)

**(No. 7)**

(Approved January 18, 2006)

## **AN ACT**

To amend clause (3), subsection (b) of Section 6 of Act No. 83 of July 2, 1987, as amended, known as the “Horse Racing Sport and Industry Act” for the purpose of empowering the Horse Racing Board to establish, through regulations, a scale of weight to fix a minimum weight of not less than one hundred and sixteen (116) pounds for all First Category A jockeys, regardless of the age of the race horses.

### **STATEMENT OF MOTIVES**

By petition of the “Jockey Guild” of the United States, a new scale of weight was approved which is also expected to be immediately approved by the race secretaries throughout the Nation. Said scale establishes that the minimum weight in the United States is increased to one hundred and sixteen pounds. In Puerto Rico, however, the minimum weight is one hundred and eleven (11) pounds, which forces jockeys to constantly take pills and medication to suppress their appetites as well as to go on rigorous diets, including the use of saunas, and induced vomiting to make the required weight. The side effect of these medications, the use and abuse of diuretics, and purging, endangers the health and lives of these jockeys.

It has been estimated that some twenty-five (25) jockeys constantly put their health at risk because of weight loss, since they most lose four (4) to six (6) pounds per day in order to comply with the provisions of the Racing

Plan, pursuant to Section 1203 of Horse Racing Regulation No. 4118 of February 13, 1990. Some of these jockeys are winners of classics.

While in the continental United States the minimum weight of one hundred and eighteen (118) pounds has been orally agreed on by the horse racing entities, in Puerto Rico our jockeys must face the apparent neglect of the local authorities to put a stop to this situation. It has been alleged by connoisseurs of the industry that the process of taming begins with one and half (1-1/2) year old ponies, whose knees are open and their physical constitution is not duly formed. The tamers that work with them range in weight between one hundred and forty (140) and two hundred (200) pounds, without counting the galloping equipment and the usual equipment including boots, protective vest, helmet, etc. This is proof that horses can become accustomed to jockeys of a weight of some one hundred and ninety (190) pounds without the same being affected.

According to news published in the media, at present, in the jockey's rooms a bathroom has been set aside for those jockeys who need to force themselves to vomit in order to make the weight. Furthermore, they have been forced to take a series of medicines on a daily basis to lose weight, as well as saunas. Among the medications are: Enerbolizer. Adipex-p, Lasix, Inamine and Cyclone (an energy drink).

The Legislature of Puerto Rico deems that this situation is intolerable. It is inexcusable that some good and responsible Puerto Ricans should have to undergo such hardships in order to support their homes. It is imperative that the Horse Racing Board take this matter into its hands and amends the Horse Racing Regulations, created by virtue of Act No. 83, supra, for the purpose of establishing a scale of weight that fixes the minimum weight in

not less than 116 pounds for all First Category A jockeys, regardless of the age of the race horses.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF PUERTO RICO:**

Section 1.- Clause (3), subsection (b) of Section 6 of Act No. 83 of July 2, 1987, as amended, is hereby amended to read as follows:

“Section 6.- Horse Racing Board – Powers

- (a) ...
- (b) Among other things, the Board shall have power to:
  - (1) ...
  - (2) ...
  - (3) Prescribe the rules by which holding horse races shall be governed through the approval of an annual plan to be known as the ‘Racing Plan,’ which shall serve as a guide and provide orientation so that the Racing Secretary may set forth the overall conditions for the monthly programming of races. It shall adopt a horse racing plan that would maintain a balance between native and imported horses and seek to increase the number of races with native horses and establish a scale of weight that fixes a minimum weight of not less than one hundred and sixteen (116) pounds for all First Category A jockeys, regardless of the age of the race horse. This racing plan may be revised.”

Section 2.- This Act shall take effect immediately after its approval.

## CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify to the Secretary of State that the following Act No. 7 (H.B. 2182) (Conference) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the 15<sup>th</sup> Legislature of Puerto Rico:

**AN ACT** to amend clause (3), subsection (b) of Section 6 of Act No. 83 of July 2, 1987, as amended, known as the “Horse Racing Sport and Industry Act” for the purpose of empowering the Horse Racing Board to establish, through regulations, a scale of weight to fix a minimum weight of not less than one hundred and sixteen (116) pounds for all First Category A jockeys, regardless of the age of the race horses,

has been translated from Spanish to English and that the English version is correct.

In San Juan, Puerto Rico, today 2<sup>nd</sup> of June of 2006.

Francisco J. Domenech  
Director