

WHEREAS, the legal name of the Orange County Fair is the 32nd District Agricultural Association, doing business as the OC Fair & Event Center; the OC Fair is a state entity within the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s Division of Fairs and Expositions; and

WHEREAS, the first OC Fair occurred in 1890 when the Orange County Community Fair Corporation was formed; in 1894 the Orange County Fair Association assumed responsibility of the OC Fair; the early OC Fairs showcased horse racing and livestock demonstrations; throughout the history of Orange County, the OC Fair has prominently displayed the equestrian community; and

WHEREAS, the mission of the Orange County Fair and Event Center is the “Celebration of Orange County’s Communities, Interests and Heritage”; Orange County has a rich and strong equestrian heritage which continues today; and

WHEREAS, in 1980 the 15 acre Orange County Fairgrounds Equestrian Center was constructed in the northeast portion of the Orange County Fairgrounds; in 2003, changes to the OC Fair’s Master Plan as adopted by the OC Fair Board resulted in the eventual removal of 7.5 acres of the Equestrian Center’s 15 acre operating area and the loss of over 100 stalls; and

WHEREAS, removal of the 7.5 acres reduced the OC Fair’s options to accommodate the relocation of large animals during an emergency in the county; and

WHEREAS, since 1998 Orange County has witnessed the closure of numerous stable facilities that include Anaco Ranch in Anaheim, Peppertree Ranch in Brea, Huntington Crest Stables in Huntington Beach, UC Irvine Stables and the El Toro Equestrian Center in Irvine, River Trail Stables in Orange, Creekside Stables and Camp Cookie for Children in San Juan Capistrano, Knox Stables in Santa Ana, El Cajon Corrals and the Triple B Equestrian Center in Yorba Linda; the cumulative impact of these closures resulted in the loss of approximately 1,400 stalls; and

WHEREAS, considering the substantial loss of stable facilities in Orange County, there is a significant public benefit in preserving existing stables in Orange County including the stables located at the Orange County Fairgrounds; and

WHEREAS, it is the understanding of the Orange County Board of Supervisors that the OC Fair Board of Directors is actively considering the complete removal of the remaining 7.5 acre Equestrian Center; and

WHEREAS, Orange County agricultural lands declined from 60,521 acres in 1987 to only 13,152 acres in 2007, a reduction of 47,369 acres or 78%; elimination of the existing OC Fairgrounds equestrian facilities would contribute to this trend.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS does hereby support the preservation of the equestrian facilities at the Orange County Fairgrounds, opposes any action that would reduce the number of available stables, and encourages the OC Fair Board and the equestrian community to work together to preserve this vital resource and to incorporate its use into OC Fair events.