



To: Chairman John Barker
Vice Chair Ron Highland
Members, House Federal & State Affairs Committee

From: Kelly Kultala, Executive Director, Humane Society Legislative Fund of Kansas

Re: HB 2545: Oppose Greyhound Racing in Kansas

Date: February 13, 2018

My name is Kelly Kultala, and I'm the Executive Director of the Humane Society Legislative Fund of Kansas. HSLF of Kansas is a political advocacy organization dedicated to improving animal welfare. Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns about the possible return of greyhound racing in Kansas.

First and foremost, allow me to put to rest the false hope that greyhound racing will be a profitable venture for Kansas. It won't be. How do I know? Because it has never happened in any state. Ever. More than 30 tracks have closed in 10 states. Dog racing remains legal in just five. Florida is the sole big dog racing state, and it is losing as much as \$3.3 million per year simply because the cost of regulations exceeds taxes collected.

The three greyhound tracks once in operation in Kansas also failed. From the beginning of dog racing in Kansas in 1990 to its end in 2008, the amount of money gambled on dog racing in Kansas plummeted by 95 percent.

HB 2545 is a complex bill that asks legislators to take a big gamble with the status quo because dog racing and slot machines allegedly represents an economic opportunity for Kansas. You need only look to the experiences of other states to see that this is not true. Subsidizing dog racing with profits from expanded gaming has failed in Iowa, Rhode Island, and West Virginia. Iowa and Rhode Island have rescinded these subsidies, and West Virginia is considering it.

In Florida, where two dog tracks were authorized to offer slot machine gambling if they also run a full schedule of live racing, they want to end the live racing mandate at their facilities. Florida tracks lose more than \$30 million on live racing each year, but they need to maintain the activity as a loss leader for other profitable forms of expanded gambling they wish to offer. According to a Washington Post article from June 16, 2017, "The result is that the 7,000 or so racing greyhounds in Florida are running merely to keep the poker tables full." "State figures indicate that nearly 400 dogs have died at Florida tracks from 2013 – 2017."





In Arkansas, despite the introduction of slot machines at its Southland dog track, the amount of money wagered on live dog racing has still plummeted 45 percent in the last eight years.

Speaking to the Kansas Lottery Gaming Facility Review Board, May 29, 2015, Topeka, Phil Ruffin, owner of Wichita Greyhound Park, The Woodlands, and Camptown Greyhound Park stated, "Parimutuel is dead and Greyhound is even worse..."

In short, dog racing is a dying industry wherever it exists, and using slot machines as an economic generator for live dog racing is a scheme that doesn't work. We at HSLF KS strongly urge the committee to end this cruel industry by prohibiting greyhound racing in Kansas. Reject HB 2545.

Sincerely,

Kelly Kultala

