

Re: HB 2545 OPPONENT WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

House Federal and State Affairs

Dear Chair Baker and members of the Committee:

I am writing you to ask you to **OPPOSE HB 2545**, this is a bill that would bring back greyhound racing to Kansas.

My name is Elizabeth Gunneson and I am a resident of Sedgwick County – this is where one of the three Greyhound Racing tracks is located.

This is an issue that is very important to me and I do not want Greyhound Racing to return to Sedgwick County. The people of Kansas have spoken out three different times to not support it. All three tracks that were in Kansas had significant financial losses with one of the tracks only being opened for 13 weeks (Camptown Greyhound Park in 1995). In Kansas the amount of money spent at dog tracks decreased 95% and nationwide it declined 81% between 1990 to 2008. There is no financial gain that would be made by bringing back greyhound racing in Kansas. Nationwide numbers show that the amount wagered in the US dropped from \$3.5 billion in 1991 to \$500 million in 2014 (this is from a report by the Association of Racing Commissioners International)

Already 40 states have outlawed greyhound racing and of the remaining 10 there is only 5 where it is legal and operational. There are only 19 dog tracks in the US and Florida is home to 12 of those. The number of people in the crowds and their profit continue to decrease.

Many other states have tried to subsidize racing with other gambling and it has failed. So far Iowa, Rhode Island have ended their subsidizing programs and West Virginia is thinking about it. The track in Florida loses \$30 million on racing each year.

Even more important to myself and many other animal lovers is the losses that are not measured in dollars and cents but in lives and quality of life. At one race track there were 80 dogs that were injured in 6 months. Most of the injuries were broken legs but also sprains, muscle tears and spinal injuries. Since 2013 a report shows that almost 400 dogs have died in Florida. How is this number an acceptable number of dogs to die! The fact that dogs are dying while racing is not ok and should not be ok to anyone. Their quality of lives is not what a dog deserves. They spend 20 or more hours a day stuck in a small crate. These dogs are given drugs to keep them from going into heat and to mask pain and not treat the source of pain. One vet was investigated after several of his dogs tested positive for cocaine. An article from the ASPCA states that on average that every three days a racing greyhound dog is dying.

The racing industry promotes an overproduction of dogs. What happens to these dogs when they are injured or no longer perform at the level the industry demands? Our shelters and rescues are already overfull and trying to stay ahead and rescue as many animals as possible. The community should not have to take care of all of the dumped animals that are tossed aside for no fault of their own. The track isn't going to care for them after it is done, if they can't find someone to take them they will just euthanize them and a life will be lost because it was no longer of use. That is not what a dog is for to use for financial gain and just toss away when you are done.

I ask you to OPPOSE HB 2545. Please do not bring back greyhound racing to the state of Kansas both for the financial part and more importantly to me the welfare of these animals who cannot speak up for themselves. If we are not their voice who will be!

Respectfully,

/s/ Elizabeth Gunneson

Wichita, KS

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