

The House On Federal and State Affairs Committee

March 6, 2020

Michael Strickland, Abilene, Kansas

Kansas Greyhound Association Board Member

Good morning chairman and members of the committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today. My name is Michael Strickland. I am a third generation greyhound breeder from Abilene, KS. Since my childhood, animal agriculture has been a foundation of knowledge in my family and has carried over to the care of our greyhounds. I have enjoyed growing up raising and showing cattle and hogs in 4h and being involved in FFA. Those experiences are not much unlike many families in rural Kansas. Many breeders involved in the care of greyhound racing here in Kansas have a background of animal husbandry and many currently also raise cattle or are involved with horses in some compacity.

Our investments to better canine care extend beyond the farms and track care. The NGA has invested over 200 thousand in vaccine development through Kansas State University and as well as initiated our DNA program through KSU. This past year, farms have participated in conjunction with local veterinarians and multiple universities through KSU to researching better worming treatment. These are investment that benefit all canines.

I'm here today in-light of language on greyhound racing in the senate bill that potentially excludes greyhound racing on sports wagering platforms. I certainly understand that greyhound racing is just a sliver of what this governing body is trying to accomplish with bring sports gambling to Kansas. But I want to take this opportunity to bring light what greyhound racing means to Kansas.

Opponents of greyhound racing for years have claimed that it is a dying sport, often citing and often reporting that greyhound racing is banned in 41 states. When in fact many states never had racing to begin with, because they prohibited all pari-mutuel wagering. Greyhound racing remains legal in 49 states with many states have popular amateur racing and coursing events through various clubs and associations. In 2018, a deceptive multi-million dollar campaign by the Humane Society of the United States through a constitutional amendment process banned wagering on live racing in Florida, However, the amendment did not ban racing, nor ban the wagering of racing outside of Florida with use of simulcasting and online wagering. Amendment 13 has caused lawsuits against the state for compensation and as of last week a judge ruled against the state for a dismissal in one particular case. Amendment 13 is also being further challenged to be overturn by a group called Support Working Animals. Many prevalent organizations like American Veterinary Medical Association, American Kennel Club and Florida Cattlemen's association opposed the amendment. But no bigger statement of support was made than the thousands of adoption leaders and pet owners that showed their support through efforts to educate the public on greyhound racing in Florida.

The retired racing greyhound has become a pet phenomenon. More than a hundred experienced adoption groups, including those directly involved in Kansas have come out in support of racing possible returning to our state. They wish attest to the care and an understanding of how racing

life of highly socialized animal translates into home. Along with NGA policies, most of these groups diligently make sure no retired greyhound would end up in a shelter after being adopted. Popularity in the retired racing greyhound is further proofed by many groups reporting waiting list of approved pet homes.

Thank You

I would appreciate any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Strickland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with some loops and flourishes.

Michael Strickland