

My Name is Cher Oliver

I was director of Kansas City Regap for 20 years and for the last 8+ years I have been a volunteer for REGAP and a Greyhound advocate.

I am here today to ask you to please remove Greyhound Racing and Greyhound Simulcasts from HB 2671. While I am not against gaming or gambling and feel it would be an opportunity for revenue for Kansas, I am against using animals for gambling or a so called "sport" therefore we are advocating for Senate Bill 283 vs. HB2671.

The Greyhound industry has been dying for years. People are aware of the abuses within the industry and do not support the tracks any longer. This is clear by the banning of Greyhound racing in 41 states. Florida, the state where racing began, is the most recent, with closings of all their tracks by the end of this year.

We are a small rescue group from Missouri and Kansas. We are not supported by the Greyhound industry. We fund all of our rescue efforts by donations, fundraisers, and our own personal dollars. The industry likes to tout that they fund and find homes for all their dogs. That is simply not true. Our group, as of 2019 has spent well over a million dollars on vet and kenneling bills. Over the last 28 years we have seen atrocities that are unspeakable. For years, my late husband, myself, and a group of volunteers spent every other weekend going from farm to farm in Kansas taking as many Greyhounds as we possibly could from these farms for vetting and eventual placement. This allowed us first hand insight into the conditions of the farms and kennels. Obviously on each trip, we could not take the glut of Greyhounds that were not useful to the breeders, and upon returning in two weeks, many of those Greyhounds disappeared. When asked where they were, we were given stories such as, they came down with parvo or they injured themselves and we just had to let them go. Or they would just act as if they didn't know which dog we were talking about. I still have nightmares about the conditions the Greyhounds are kept in. The **Kansas** Greyhound industry is "self regulated" so unlike every other breeder in all states, including Kansas, the Dept. of Agriculture and Animal Control are unable to license and police their farms. **I ask you, if the racing industry treats their Greyhounds so wonderfully, why have they positioned themselves to not be under the same scrutiny, requirements, and oversight that all other animal**

industries are under? When we finally started questioning these conditions and speaking out about the abuse and neglect we were of course excluded from going to the farms any longer and in many instances, we were not allowed to have their Greyhounds to place. When we reported the conditions of the kennels or the dogs to the NGA inspectors (their self-regulators), they would always come back with a report stating all was OK and that they saw nothing wrong with the dogs. We continue, in spite of their efforts to block us, rescuing their unwanted and discarded Greyhounds. We have placed over 5,500 since REGAP began in 1992. This has always been just a "finger in the dam" of the thousands that are discarded yearly. We continue to rescue Greyhounds that are severely under weight, riddled with parasites, have crate sores from being crated 22+ hours a day, broken bones, teeth that have been whittled to the gums because of sheer stress and boredom from being crated for endless hours. They chew on the wires and bars of the crates until their teeth are gone. These are just a few of the horrible cases we see routinely. Is this truly what Kansas wants to revive and support? I would sincerely hope not. Kansas would be condemned heavily for allowing Greyhound racing to begin again.

The obvious showing of lack of support in Kansas is the fact that all 3 of the tracks in Kansas closed years ago because of lack of public interest. Greyhound racing began in 1989 with the opening of 2 dog tracks, Wichita Greyhound Park and the Woodlands. A third track, Camptown Greyhound Park, opened for six months in 1995 before failing financially and closing. By 2008 live racing had ceased at all Kansas Greyhound tracks following a 95% decline in betting. Why should state government subsidize a failing business model that brought in no revenue for the state?

We ask that you please remove Greyhound racing and simulcasts from the bill or better yet support Senate Bill 283 and let this abusive, failing industry die.