

Testimony
SB 414
Senate Agribusiness Committee

Tom Taplin
Abilene, KS
February 22, 2012

Chairman Taddiken and Committee members,

My name is Tom Taplin, board member of the Kansas Greyhound Association (KGA). I am also on the facilities committee and Hall of Fame committee for the National Greyhound Association. My sons and I are greyhound operators in Kansas. I am also an inspector for the district that includes the State of Kansas and Missouri. When I'm not at the farm or spending time with my family, I coach wrestling at Abilene High School and help run camps and coach in the summer. I have served as an inspector for the National Greyhound Association (NGA) for the past 9 years. In this capacity I, along with 8 other inspectors, are responsible for inspection of about 75 greyhound farms in Kansas.

I see firsthand every day the importance of our industry in Kansas communities. A significant amount of our farm income is spent locally for feed, veterinary services and supply. My family has one of the largest greyhound farms in Kansas.

I am here to testify in opposition of certain parts of SB 414 that pertain to the changing of the status of racing greyhounds in the State of Kansas. I know it seems very odd a statute would exclude a greyhound from the definition of dog. The exception is very specific, in that it applies to Racing Greyhounds. Those dogs are subject to multiple inspections, specific care and treatment requirements. Under the direction of the National Greyhound Association, failure to comply with these stringent requirements carries severe penalties including the potential of a lifetime ban from the industry. Such a ban is the professional "death penalty" for business operators who make a huge investment in bringing a quality racing greyhound to market.

The change on page 14 lines 25-26 of SB 414 will not improve conditions for racing greyhounds on the farm. It will more likely increase costs through conflicting jurisdictional procedures and approaches that require expansion of other inspection programs which have no true benefit to the state or the racing greyhounds.

I am concerned that my business will face an added layer of inspection and costs for enforcement of regulations that are not beneficial to the greyhounds on our farm, nor efficient for the state to enforce.

Sincerely,