

**Testimony of Gary Guccione  
Executive Director of National Greyhound Assn.  
Abilene, KS**

Feb 22, 2012  
To the Senate Agriculture Committee  
Re: SB 414

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The National Greyhound Association, proudly headquartered in Abilene, is and has been the official registry for all racing greyhounds in North America going back to the organization's birth, 106 years ago (1906).

The issue of deleting the exemption of greyhounds from the pet animal act in Kansas seems to come up every five or six years or so, ever since the exemption was made back in the 1980s. Once again it has surfaced in SB 414, which requires a review as to why greyhounds were initially exempt, and why that exemption has never been lifted whenever the issue's been reconsidered by the Legislature.

It's unfortunate that the exemption comes in the definition of a "dog" and not elsewhere in the law. As a result, it invites the simplistic assertion that Kansas is somehow stating that greyhounds are not dogs. Before that ludicrous argument is again raised, we wish to respectfully state the obvious—as we did in our testimony in 2005—that: Of course greyhounds are dogs! However, they are exempt from the other breeds in the pet animal act for a variety of very logical reasons, which we will reiterate at this time.

**1. GREYHOUND BREEDING FARMS ARE ALREADY UNDER SUFFICIENT REGULATION.** All Kansas greyhound farms—approximately 75 of them at this time—are subject to regular inspections by the National Greyhound Association and the Kansas Greyhound Registry. They are also subject to local animal-welfare laws.

NGA's licensing and registration process mandates the submittal of forms and fees every time a breeding takes place, every time a litter is whelped, every time a litter of pups is tattooed at 3 months age, and every time a pup is individually registered (or named) in preparation of going to the track for its racing career. All breeding stock—both sires and dams—are DNA registered with NGA to validate parentage and pedigree records. NGA inspections are carried out by a full-time inspector, assisted by as many as 50 "deputized" parttime inspectors located throughout the country.

Moreover, with respect to Kansas inspections—the NGA has always been, and shall continue to be, more than willing to cooperate and communicate openly with state Dept. of Agriculture authorities and to share inspection information, farm status or any other relevant data with those authorities at any time.

**2. NGA GREYHOUNDS ARE BRED FOR RACING/PERFORMANCE.** Because of that fact, and because they are not being bred for any other purpose, neither in Kansas or

any other state, it's incumbent upon greyhound breeders, if they expect to be competitive and remain in business, to provide the best of care, feed, exercise, even social interaction, to every greyhound from the time it's born until it leaves the farm and goes to the track.

This is precisely why the vast majority of breeding farms throughout North America, and particularly in Kansas, do such an exemplary job in caring for their greyhounds. It's also why there have been incredibly few instances of any type of abuse or neglect on greyhound farms in the state over the years. In the rare occasion there has been a problem, NGA and KGA have moved quickly to correct it. In extreme cases, NGA expels the offender permanently and completely from the industry.

Thus the exemption of NGA greyhounds from the pet animal act has worked incredibly well for greyhound farms in Kansas in the more than two decades that the law has been in effect.

**3. KANSAS GREYHOUNDS ARE NOT BRED FOR PETS.** While nearly all greyhounds are either placed into adoption programs out or brought back to farms for a breeding career once their racing careers are over, no NGA-registered greyhounds are being bred on Kansas farms for any other purpose than to race. Quite simply—there is no greyhound pet breeding industry, neither in Kansas nor anywhere else in the USA.

**4. THERE IS NO MARKET OR DEMAND FOR AN EXCLUSIVE OR SEPARATE GREYHOUND PET INDUSTRY.** The demand for greyhounds as pets is adequately being fulfilled by racing greyhounds, once their racing careers are completed. Approximately 20,000 greyhounds a year are being placed into homes as pets by more than 300 adoption agencies in the US and Canada that deal exclusively in retired racing greyhounds. The racing industry works with these groups in helping make the transition from the racetrack to the greyhound's "retired" role as a pet in a loving home.

The greyhound adoption programs are a positive by-product of the greyhound racing industry. But it should be clearly understood that that NGA greyhounds bred and raised in Kansas—or in any other state—are NOT bred and raised for pet purposes.

In conclusion: An old adage states that, before you tear down a fence, it's important to find out why the fence was put up in the first place. Obviously there was good reason why the exemption for NGA racing greyhounds was adopted about a quarter-century ago. Time has proven the exemption for NGA-registered racing greyhounds as the proper course to have taken. It's a fence that doesn't need to be torn down.