

GARY GUCCIONE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL GREYHOUND ASSOCIATION

TESTIMONY REGARDING THE EFFECTS OF HORSE AND GREYHOUND TRACKS ON COMMERCE IN KANSAS
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMERCE, LABOR AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MARCH 2, 2016

Chairman Hutton and Distinguished Members of the House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee:

My name is Gary Guccione. I am the Executive Director of the National Greyhound Association in Abilene. I have been with the association for 45 years and I have served as Executive Director for 34 of those years. I have been in the greyhound business all of my life.

When I first moved to Abilene in 1971, I couldn't help but notice the incredible impact that the greyhound industry had on that area. I soon learned that more greyhounds were raised in Dickinson County than any other counties in the United States. It has been the home of the National Greyhound Association (NGA) for more than 60 years. The Greyhound Hall of Fame was constructed there in 1973 across the street from the Eisenhower Center. The town itself and its residents are incredibly proud that it is universally known as the Greyhound Capital of the World.

The breeding industry in Abilene has been at a low for the last decade, largely due to the closing of the race tracks in the state. It costs anywhere from \$2,500 to \$3,000 per greyhound, or approximately \$20,000 for an average litter of pups to raise to 20 months of age, which is when they go to the race track. Because of uncertainties in the industry, breeders are calling me frequently to ask whether they should breed their next litter, not knowing what the landscape might look like in 20 months.

There is no doubt that the reopening of greyhound tracks in Kansas will help jumpstart the breeding industry in our state again. Many of the jobs referred to by Representative Barker will be farm jobs as these greyhound owners breed and raise greyhounds in Burlingame, Abilene, and other towns across the state. There are so many positives in this proposal that will give a boost to jobs, the economy, and to the lives of hundreds of families who have placed their trust and futures in the greyhound industry. We very much appreciate your support of this legislation.