



TO: Committee on Appropriations
FROM: Kate Meghji, Executive Director
DATE: March 22, 2017
RE: Opposition to HB 2173 – Don't let greyhound racing return to Kansas

To the Honorable Chair Waymaster and members of the Committee:

I am the executive director of the Lawrence Humane Society, President of the Pet Animal Coalition of Kansas, a member of the Society of Animal Welfare Administrators, and I have been involved with animal sheltering and welfare for more than 10 years.

I am respectfully asking you to vote NO on HB 2173 or amend the bill to remove greyhound racing. Greyhound racing is not only inhumane and results in needless injuries and deaths of hundreds of dogs every year, it is no longer a financially sustainable business. The three Kansas racetracks all suffered massive losses and shut down – and HB 2173 will allow subsidizing the cost of greyhound racing with slot machine revenue. Nationally, revenue at dog race tracks declined more than 80% between 2001-2014.

Greyhound racing attendance is dwindling nationwide as states pass laws ending or phasing out the sport and the public chooses not to participate in this cruel enterprise. The decline in greyhound racing can also be attributed to the dramatic loss in profits; race tracks are losing money and state governments often wind up having to spend more to regulate the sport than they get back in revenue.

While HB 2173 would require the race track facilities to place funds in escrow to pay back the casino manager's privilege fees and interest, the fiscal note for this bill states **"however, the racetrack gaming facility manager would be reimbursed for the payment amount to casino managers out of the state's share of revenue from the racetrack gaming facility that would be distributed to the Expanded Lottery Act Revenues Fund."** The long-term revenue estimate for the State has not been prepared.

I want to thank each of you for your service and dedication to Kansas, and your consideration of my request to remove greyhound racing from HB 2173 or simply vote NO.

I am happy to answer any questions or provide any additional information that you may require.

Thank you,

Kate Meghji
Executive Director, Lawrence Humane Society
President, Pet Animal Coalition of Kansas (PACK)
O: (785) 843-6835 ext. 8100 C: (217) 721-6986 Email: director@lawrencehumane.org