



To: Chairman Bud Estes  
Vice Chair Robert Olson  
Members, Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee

From: Humane Society Legislative Fund of Kansas

Re: SB 427: Oppose Greyhound Racing in Kansas

Date: April 3, 2018

My name is Kelly Kultala, and I'm representing the Humane Society Legislative Fund of Kansas. HSLF KS works to pass animal protection laws at the state and federal levels and to educate the public about animal welfare issues. Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns about the possible return of greyhound racing in Kansas.

First and foremost, allow me to put to rest the false hope that greyhound racing will be a profitable venture for Kansas. It won't be. How do I know? Because it has never happened in any state. Ever. More than 30 tracks have closed in 10 states. Dog racing remains legal in just six. Florida is the sole big dog racing state, and it is losing as much as \$3.3 million per year simply because the cost of regulations exceeds taxes collected.

The three greyhound tracks once in operation in Kansas also failed spectacularly. From the beginning of dog racing in Kansas in 1990 to its end in 2008, the amount of money gambled on dog racing in Kansas plummeted by 95 percent.

Greyhound racing failed in Kansas because consumers voted with their pocketbooks not to support it. Now SB 427 proposes to revive it by subsidizing this outdated form of "entertainment" with modern slot machines. In Sedgwick County, SB 427 requires greyhound racing for at least 50 weeks, 13 live races a day, five days a week. There will be no greyhound racing in Wyandotte County because of their local resolution/ordinance banning greyhound racing. In Crawford County, greyhound racing would be for at least 25 weeks, 12 live races a day, five days a week.

SB 427 is a complex bill that asks legislators to take a big gamble with the status quo because the marriage of dog racing and slot machines allegedly represents an economic opportunity for Kansas. But you need only look to the experiences of other states to see that this is a ruse. Subsidizing dog racing with profits from expanded gaming has failed in





Iowa, Rhode Island, and West Virginia. Iowa and Rhode Island have rescinded these subsidies, and West Virginia is considering it.

In Arkansas, despite the introduction of slot machines at its Southland dog track, the amount of money wagered on live dog racing has still plummeted 45 percent in the last eight years.

In Florida, where two dog tracks were authorized to offer slot machine gambling if they also run a full schedule of live racing, they want to end the live racing mandate at their facilities. Florida tracks lose more than \$40 million on live racing each year, but they need to maintain the activity as a loss leader for other profitable forms of expanded gambling they wish to offer.

On March 20, the Florida Constitution Revision Commission (CRC) voted 18-14 in favor of Prop. 67 to ban greyhound racing in Florida. The measure is headed to the CRC Style and Drafting Committee, where it will need a 2/3 vote before it is placed on the November 2018 ballot. If approved by voters, dog racing in Florida would be phased out.

It should be noted that nationwide, the dog racing industry employs very few people. The U.S. Economic Census of 2012 indicated that the total number of racetrack employees in counties with active dog tracks was between 7,788 – 16,059 people. This included full- and part-time employees for all horse tracks, dog tracks, and auto racetracks. These figures represented the aggregate employment data for 58 racetrack facilities, of which only 22 were dog tracks. The minimal employment opportunities provided by greyhound tracks is further supported by data from the Iowa Racing and Gaming Association, which reported that its two tracks had only 88 racing employees as of 2014. One of these two tracks stopped dog racing in December 2015.

In short, dog racing is a dying industry wherever it exists, and using slot machines as an economic generator for live dog racing is a scheme that doesn't work. We at HSLF KS strongly urge the committee to end this cruel industry by prohibiting greyhound racing in Kansas. Reject SB 427.

Sincerely,

Kelly Kultala

