

February 16, 2021

Representative John Barker
Chairman, Federal and State Affairs Committee

VIA Email

Dear Representative Barker,

I am writing in regard to House Bill 2199 which is currently being heard in your committee. While our industry is not specifically mentioned in this bill's present form, we are quite aware of past history with this type of legislation and would like to "get ahead" of the game by voicing our concerns over the possibility of the pari-mutuel industry, and specifically greyhound racing, being excluded from sports wagering legislation.

Pari-mutuel facilities, while not currently open, are still able to operate legally in Kansas and our hope is that racing facilities may open sometime in the near future and be afforded the same privileges as other gaming facilities and/or gaming facility managers. In past years, casinos and other entities, have attempted to exclude pari-mutuel facilities from this type of legislation and there is no justification for such action.

Pari-mutuel wagering is currently enjoying a tremendous rise in popularity as you can see by the handle (amount wagered on races) figures below;

Total U.S. Greyhound Handle

2017 \$754,510,861
2018 \$759,122,859
2019 \$764,295,819

West Virginia Greyhound Tracks Handle

2017 \$111,803,546
2018 \$126,342,514
2019 \$124,854,450*
2021 On pace to handle over \$74,000,000
in the 1st quarter alone!

* Less performances run by tracks due weather and other factors
2020 figures not listed as pandemic affected track operations for months

The West Virginia racing facilities noted above also have casino and sports wagering options at their locations so it really can be an apples to apples comparison.

We ask that you please keep our industry and many local Kansas greyhound owners and breeders in mind as you work through this legislation. If you have any questions or are in need of more information please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jim Gartland
National Greyhound Association