

# National Greyhound Association

Phone (785) 263-4660 • P.O. Box 543 • Abilene, Kansas 67410

Feb. 25, 2015

Rep. Paul Holvey, Chairman  
House Business and Labor Committee  
900 Court St. NE, H-277  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chairman Holvey and Committee Members:

On behalf of the National Greyhound Association (NGA), the official registry for racing greyhounds in the United States, I write to express our grave concerns about HB 2765, a bill that would permanently ban greyhound racing in Oregon. It is important that legislators understand the true agenda behind this initiative. We respectfully call your attention to these points:

- HB 2765 OFFERS NO BENEFIT TO OREGONIANS OR GREYHOUNDS. There is no rational argument for legislating against a business that has not existed in Oregon for the past ten years. This bill offers no real benefit to Oregon taxpayers, state coffers, or to greyhounds.
- THE BILL, IF PASSED, WOULD MAKE THE OREGON LEGISLATURE A PR AND FUNDRAISING TOOL FOR GREY2K AND HSUS. While neither Oregon citizens nor racing greyhounds will benefit from HB 2765, passage of the bill would create a public relations and fundraising windfall for these two organizations, and enable Grey2K and HSUS to cite the Oregon precedent in attempting to ban the sport in other states. This is an animal rights numbers game, pure and simple.



*Established in 1906*

which guaranteed that every retired racer would be adopted or returned to the farm after retirement. While there is absolutely no indication that live racing will ever return to Oregon, there would be no reason to fear for the welfare of the greyhounds if it did.

- GREY2K'S AGENDA IS ABOUT FUNDRAISING, NOT GREYHOUND WELFARE.  
If Grey2K were truly concerned with greyhound welfare, they would support initiatives to ensure greyhound health and safety--but they do not. For example, in Florida, where greyhound racing is still active at many tracks, Grey2K is promoting a bill that would require the public reporting of greyhound injuries. However, they oppose an NGA-endorsed bill that contains the same injury reporting provisions, but also requires tracks to make certain improvements to reduce greyhound injuries. There is only one reason for Grey2K to oppose such a measure. If greyhound injuries are reduced, Grey2K's ability to exploit those injuries for fundraising gain is also diminished.

The greyhound racing community has made tremendous strides over the past twenty years. The NGA and other racing industry organizations have adopted tough internal standards governing greyhound care and welfare. Those who are found guilty of serious violations are banned from the sport for life, and others prohibited from doing business with them at risk of the same penalty. You will be interested to know that in most cases, it is other industry members, not animal rights activists, who bring these cases to light and trigger the investigation process.

On the adoption front, greyhound tracks and breeders have jointly contributed more than \$2.5 million over the past twenty years in support of track-based or independent greyhound adoption programs. As a result of this effort, implemented in cooperation with dozens of independent volunteer organizations around the country, we can proudly say that more than 95 percent of all registered greyhounds are adopted or returned to the farm as pets or breeders when they retire. We continue to work toward the goal of 100 percent adoption of all adoptable greyhounds.

It is unfortunate that animal rights activists waste legislators' time with initiatives like HB 2765, which even its proponents admit is largely symbolic and has no practical value or benefit to the people of Oregon. The supporters of this bill seek its passage simply because it will enhance their fundraising efforts and help them influence legislation in other states. We hope you will not let Grey2K and HSUS transform the

Grey2K and HSUS claim that 39 states have banned greyhound racing. The fact is that in most of those states, live racing either existed at all or had already ended for economic reasons. But Grey2K and HSUS exploited them as huge victories for fundraising purposes, as they will exploit the passage of HB 2765.

- OREGON'S PASSAGE OF THE BILL WILL BE FRAMED AS A VALIDATION OF THE FALSE AND DEFAMATORY CLAIMS MADE BY GREY2K AND HSUS. Both Grey2K and HSUS have made a practice of defaming animal enterprises for profit. On November 6, 2000, the Boston Herald described Grey2K's efforts to ban greyhound racing in that state "a ruthless campaign of deceit, distortion and defamation of character." That campaign was funded in large part by donations from the HSUS.

Similarly, in 2014, HSUS and several other animal rights groups recently paid a total of over \$25 million to settle a racketeering lawsuit arising from their false claims of elephant abuse against Ringling Brothers Circus. The original elephant abuse case was thrown out of court after it was learned that the animal rights groups had paid a key witness who lied under oath, with the court describing the animal abuse lawsuit as "frivolous, vexatious and unreasonable litigation."

Soon after, Ringling's parent company, Feld Entertainment, counter-sued under federal racketeering (organized crime) statutes. The defendants paid the settlement to avoid allowing the case to go to trial in public court.

To give you just one example of animal rights misrepresentation with respect to greyhound racing, Grey2K and HSUS have consistently claimed that at least 20,000 greyhounds are euthanized annually by the industry. That number is patently absurd, given the fact that for the past five years, only about 11,200 greyhounds a year have been registered. These numbers are published annually and therefore readily available to animal rights groups. They know the truth; they simply choose to misrepresent it.

- EVEN IF GREYHOUND RACING RESUMED IN OREGON, THERE ARE STRONG REGULATIONS IN PLACE TO ENSURE GREYHOUND HEALTH AND SAFETY. Oregon was nationally recognized for the effectiveness of its greyhound racing regulations, which are still on the books. Multnomah Greyhound Park was known as a model in the racing community not only for its strong commitment to greyhound welfare at the track, but for its exceptional adoption programs,

Oregon legislature into an animal rights propaganda vehicle. Mr. Chairman, we urge you and your colleagues to oppose this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Guccione". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "G" and "G".

Gary Guccione  
Executive Director