



January, 29, 2025

Dear Members of the Oregon State House Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee,

I appreciate the opportunity to provide my testimony in opposition to HB3020. I serve as a board director of the National Greyhound Association (NGA), a farm inspector, and an adoption advocate. With over 25 years of experience as a certified trainer and canine behaviorist, I have worked hands-on with more than 15,000 dogs. My career has been dedicated to understanding canine welfare, and I urge you to vote **no** on HB3020.

The National Greyhound Association has upheld the registry and welfare of US racing greyhounds for 119 years. Greyhound racing operates under strict state regulations designed to ensure the highest standards of care for these dogs.

Contrary to misconceptions, the risk of injury in greyhound racing remains extremely low, with an incident-free rate of 99.5% of individual starts. The majority of injuries are minor, allowing the majority of dogs to return to racing after a brief rest and clearance by a state employed veterinarian.

More importantly, retired racing greyhounds enjoy a **100% adoption rate** in the U.S. These dogs transition smoothly into pet homes, underscoring their exceptional care, adaptability, and socialization. Unlike dogs who suffer from abuse or neglect and require significant rehabilitation, greyhounds emerge from racing environments **confident, well-adjusted, and rarely aggressive** due to their extensive social experiences.

Beyond animal welfare, greyhound racing plays a **critical economic role** in Oregon. Greyhound wagering accounts for up to **30% of Off-Track Betting (OTB) establishments' revenue**, generating **approximately \$3 million annually** within the state economy. Eliminating this revenue stream would force these businesses to find alternative sources of income, which is not a simple or immediate solution. As a small business owner myself, operating a coffee shop in Seattle, I understand how **thin profit margins can be**—losing a substantial percentage of revenue without a viable replacement would be devastating. The financial consequences of banning greyhound wagering **reach far beyond the sport itself**, threatening jobs, businesses, and local economies.

I have spent my career studying canine behavior and the animals I serve. Decades ago, I may have questioned the ethicality of greyhound racing. However, the industry has evolved dramatically, embracing transparency, improved welfare standards, and responsible breeding practices. The **misconceptions surrounding greyhound racing do not reflect the reality of today's industry**. When I first visited a greyhound farm, I expected to see what I had read online—but instead, I saw **happy, confident, well-cared-for dogs, free of stress and fear**. That experience reshaped my understanding and inspired me to advocate for the truth.

The US greyhound racing industry has **right-sized breeding**, ensuring that dogs who do not wish to race or sustained an injury are placed in accredited adoption programs. NGA bylaws strictly prohibit neglect or abuse, and individuals who fail to uphold these standards are removed from the industry. Like any field, there are bad actors, but we have **become exceptionally effective at identifying and addressing them before they are a risk to our dogs**. Racing track surfaces are consistently monitored and adjusted for safety, acknowledging that, like all living beings, greyhounds are not immune to injuries.

Through my work in pet dog training and behavioral rehabilitation, I have witnessed the significant difference between dogs who have endured neglect versus those raised in structured, supportive environments. If I had seen **any** evidence of inhumane treatment within the greyhound racing industry, I would have taken a very different path. Instead, I have had the privilege of working alongside some of the most dedicated animal advocates and witnessing the **positive transformation of an industry that has embraced reform**.

As a society, we advocate for positive change. We demand better treatment for animals. Yet, when change happens, we sometimes refuse to acknowledge it. Greyhound racing today is **not** what it was decades ago—it is a **regulated, welfare-focused, transparent and evolving** industry that continues to set high standards for animal care.

For these reasons, I urge you to **vote no on HB3020**. Banning greyhound wagering would not only harm Oregon's small businesses and economy but would also be a disservice to an industry that has demonstrated its commitment to **transparency, responsibility, and the well-being of its dogs**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Leslie Csokasy, CDBC, CPDT-KA, FFCP**

Board Director, National Greyhound Association

Certified Canine Behavior Consultant & Professional Dog Trainer, Fear Free Certified Professional.