

GREY2K USA WORLDWIDE



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In Memoriam

Kathy Pelton

Organization Listing is for
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February 11, 2019

Chairman Chuck Riley
Senate Committee on Business and General Government
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chairman Riley,

I am the executive director of a national non-profit greyhound protection organization named GREY2K USA. We work to pass greyhound laws, phase out commercial dog racing, and promote greyhound adoption. On behalf of our 150,000 members, I would like to share concerns we have with Senate Bills 76, 77 and 78.

These three bills provide assistance to the horse racing industry, but would also have the unintended consequence of propping up out-of-state dog tracks. SB 78 would expand simulcast gambling on greyhound races, while SB 76 also has the potential to artificially prop up the dying industry.

Dog racing is cruel and inhumane and is on the verge of collapse nationwide. Last November, citizens in Florida overwhelmingly voted to outlaw greyhound racing. Constitutional Amendment 13 passed with 69% of the vote, and was supported by a broad array of opinion leaders including Andrew Gillum, Governor Rick Scott, the League of Women Voters of Florida, Lara Trump, Ellen Degeneres, Attorney General Pam Bondi, the Florida College Democrats and Mike Huckabee.

Twenty-five years ago, there were sixty dog tracks in the United States, including Multnomah Greyhound Park. With the passage of this voter-approved measure to phase out racing at Florida's eleven dog tracks, there will remain just six tracks nationwide as of December 2020.

All across the country, greyhound racing is dying and now garners less than 1% of all wagers placed each year. In Oregon, gambling on local races at Multnomah Greyhound Park declined from \$25 million in 1995 to only \$11 million in 2004, before the track permanently closed.

According to the state of Florida, track owners had been collectively losing more than \$30 million annually because of sagging attendance and decreased wagering. According to a report commissioned by the Legislature, Florida spent more money regulating greyhound racing in its than it collected in tax revenue. The same holds true in every state where dog racing persists.

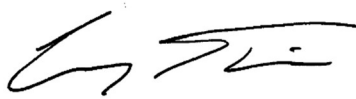
As a native Oregonian I know that we pride ourselves as being a family friendly state, and propping greyhound racing goes against our values. At commercial racetracks, hundreds of greyhounds are kept confined for 20-23 hours a day in stacked, metal cages which are barely large enough for them to stand up or turn around.

Greyhounds are also frequently injured while racing. During the 2000 racing season, 107 greyhound injuries were reported at Multnomah Greyhound Park, including dogs that suffered broken legs, lacerations and other broken bones.

If this legislation advances, please consider a simple amendment clarifying that the legislation would not apply to commercial dog racing, as well as housekeeping language removing obsolete dog racing language from statute. Oregon racetracks have already voluntarily ended dog racing. However, without a change in law, dog racing could come back at any time without scrutiny.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Theil', written in a cursive style.

Carey M. Theil
Executive Director