

MEMO



DEC 13 2010

Senate of Pennsylvania

December 10, 2010

TO: ALL SENATORS

FROM: Stewart J. Greenleaf

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SUBJECT: Cosponsorship -- **Simulcasting greyhound races**

I am reintroducing **Senate Bill 214**, amending the Crimes Code, Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, to prohibit the simulcasting of greyhound races.

In 2004 the General Assembly enacted legislation prohibiting greyhound racing in Pennsylvania. 2004 Act 36 added section 7516 to the Crimes Code to make it a misdemeanor of the first degree for a person to hold, conduct or operate a greyhound race for public exhibition. The legislation I am reintroducing amends section 7516 to prohibit a person from transmitting or receiving interstate or intrastate simulcasting of a greyhound race for monetary remuneration. For violations, a civil penalty of up to \$10,000 may be imposed.

According to Citizens Against Greyhound Racing (CAGR), as of November 2010, 25 greyhound racetracks in 7 states currently conduct live races. These states are: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Texas and West Virginia. On January 1, 2010, the Massachusetts ban on dog racing voted into law on November 4, 2008, went into effect. In July 2010, New Hampshire, a former racing state, banned racing. In 2010 the Rhode Island legislature decoupled the requirement to provide pari-mutuel racing to offer casino style gambling. The Twin River track immediately eliminated live greyhound racing. Wisconsin's last track closed in late 2009.

Many tracks with live racing simulcast their races to other tracks, casinos and off-track betting parlors around the country. Even though live greyhound racing is illegal in ten states, simulcasting is illegal in only five of these states. While some tracks have reduced or discontinued live greyhound racing over the years, the tracks remain open for simulcast races. For example, Shoreline Star in Connecticut closed its doors to live greyhound racing in 2006 but now markets itself as an entertainment complex for the simulcasting of greyhound racing.

The reasons why the General Assembly prohibited greyhound racing apply as well to simulcasting greyhound races. The racing industry still destroys an average of 9,000 dogs each year when they are no longer profitable. Approximately 14,000 are saved by rescue organizations that bear the cost of caring for these dogs – including medical expenses from injuries incurred while racing. While live racing is on the decline, revenues from simulcasting work to financially support this business but in no way improve the outcome for the dogs.

A revolving baseline of 800 – 1,000 dogs is required to sustain a mid-sized racetrack operation. New greyhounds are continually entering the system to replace greyhounds that grade-off due to injury, age or poor performance. In 2009, 17,362 greyhounds were born; 15,584 were registered to race. Approximately, 16,000 graded-off greyhounds were rescued and adopted. An estimated 9,000 greyhounds were killed; the vast majority of these greyhounds were “retirees” who were not rescued, many coming from tracks that closed in 2009 and the rest were puppies that did not make the grade.

The Senate passed this legislation during the 2009-2010 session.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Pat Snively of my office by e-mailing her at psnively@pasen.gov.