



February 1, 2025

Dear Members of the North Dakota Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony in opposition to **SB2347 and SB2384**. As a **board director of the National Greyhound Association (NGA)**, a **farm inspector**, and an **adoption advocate**, I have dedicated over **25 years** as a **certified trainer and canine behavior consultant**, working directly with more than **15,000 dogs**. My career has been devoted to ensuring the highest standards of canine welfare, and I urge you to vote **no** on these bills.

The Greyhound Industry's Commitment to Welfare

The **National Greyhound Association** has safeguarded the **registry and welfare** of U.S. racing greyhounds for over **119 years**. Greyhound racing operates under **strict state regulations**, ensuring the well-being of these dogs through rigorous oversight.

Injuries & Safety

Despite misconceptions, greyhound racing maintains an **exceptionally low injury rate**, with **99.5% of individual race starts occurring without incident**. When injuries do occur, they are typically **minor**, and dogs are carefully rehabilitated before returning to racing—only after **state-employed veterinarians clear them**. Greyhounds that sustain more serious injuries, or age out of racing, are placed in adoption programs. We have very few fatalities and those are directed by the veterinarian. In 2023, there were 10 fatalities in total. Moreover, **racing surfaces are regularly monitored and adjusted** to maximize safety, recognizing that, like all athletes, greyhounds are not immune to injuries.

Adoption & Life After Racing

Unlike dogs suffering from **abuse or neglect**, retired greyhounds **transition smoothly into pet homes**, thanks to their **extensive socialization and structured upbringing**. The U.S. greyhound racing industry has successfully adjusted breeding practices, ensuring that every dog—whether they choose not to race or sustain an injury—finds a **home through accredited adoption programs**. As a result, **retired greyhounds enjoy a 100% adoption rate**.

Strict Regulations Against Misconduct

The NGA maintains **zero tolerance** for neglect or abuse. Any individual failing to meet our strict standards is **permanently removed from the industry**. While bad actors exist in every field, we have become **highly effective at identifying and addressing them before they pose any risk to our dogs**. The racing industry also adheres to state/jurisdiction mandated conduct codes including urine testing to uncover any prohibitive substances.

Greyhound Racing & North Dakota's Economy

Greyhound wagering contributes significantly to **North Dakota's economy**. In the past two years, **ND Advanced Deposit Wagering (ADW) platforms** have processed approximately **\$60 million annually** in greyhound race wagers. In **fiscal year 2024 alone**, this figure grew to **\$67 million—an 11% increase**.

The **tax revenue generated from greyhound wagering** is distributed among four key funds:

- **Racing Commission**
- **Horse Breeders Fund**
- **Promotional Fund for race meets**
- **General Operating Fund**

While **greyhound wagering may not be the largest contributor**, every **dollar invested in racing creates a substantial economic impact**. A **2016 study by North Dakota State University** found that for every **\$1 generated by the racing industry**, **\$5.20 is reinvested back into the state's economy**.

The **North Dakota Racing Commission (NDRC)** receives **\$380,000 annually** from the general fund. Of this, the **\$87,000 tax revenue from greyhound wagering** directly supports race meets. This **\$87,000 investment generates over \$450,000 annually**, with **77% of purses remaining in North Dakota—an economic boost of approximately \$350,000 directly benefiting local racing communities**.

North Dakota's Passive Income Model & The Risks of Expansion

North Dakota maintains a **conservative stance on gambling**, allowing the state to benefit from **passive income derived through ADWs national and global reach**—without expanding access to gambling for residents. *Banning greyhound wagering will not reduce gambling participation but will remove a valued source of revenue supporting local industries.*

However, the introduction of **Historical Horse Racing (HHR) machines in local facilities** would actively expand gambling within communities—something SB2347 and SB2384 fail to acknowledge.

Conclusion: Vote NO on SB2347 & SB2384

Eliminating greyhound wagering would:

- ✗ **Harm North Dakota's racing industry**
- ✗ **Reduce economic benefits and tax revenue**
- ✗ **Punish an industry that upholds transparency, responsibility, and animal welfare**

I urge you to **vote NO on SB2347 and SB2384** to protect North Dakota's economy and its longstanding relationship with the greyhound racing industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Leslie F Csokasy

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