

Testimony **in Opposition to HB 2545** (an act concerning gaming)

Submitted by Crystal Swann Blackdeer, Executive Director, Leavenworth County Humane Society, Inc., Lansing KS (CB001LMC)

Mr. Chair and distinguished Representatives:

The multiple “WHEREAS paragraphs” introducing this legislation are full of opinion, untruth, and propaganda. For that reason alone, the merits of the bill are quite dubious.

I oppose dog racing, but what bothers me most about this bill is what it doesn’t mention.

There are no provisions in the bill for ensuring the health and sound husbandry of breeding and racing animals nor for prevention / punishment of cruelty. Where are the veterinary requirements, inspection requirements, housing requirements for the dogs?

Tracks who use dogs should be required contribute to the care of their castoffs, as should the breeders who over-produce the animals. They should subsidize the shelters and rescues who step in to take care of the animals the racers no longer find useful.

Having experienced the recent “No Tyson in Tongie” episode, transparency and local support should be primary concerns. The voters in any jurisdiction should approve of having a track operation or large scale breeding operation in their area. This does not appear to be the case uniformly.

Breeding, housing and training facilities for racing dogs should be subject to unannounced and quarterly inspection by the Animal Facility Inspection Program.

Dog racing is a failing industry. Even if it weren’t harmful to the animals, it loses money. Tracks close because not enough people want to watch or bet on the races.

Many jobs in dog racing are low-wage, dirty, physical, high noise jobs, those that are often sought by low-skill, low-education employees who are unable to obtain other employment. Proponents of this bill would be wise to consider the overall effect on the communities they represent, not just the potential for income from the operations.

Thank you for your consideration of my input.