

Testimony before the Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee

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Written-only testimony in opposition to SB 404

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Chairman Robert Olson and members of the Committee,

My name is Michael Strickland. I am in opposition to SB 404 because of the unnecessary language to remove greyhound racing in its current form. I am a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation greyhound breeder from Abilene, KS. Since my childhood, animal agriculture has been a foundation of knowledge in my family and has carried over to the care of our greyhounds. I have enjoyed growing up raising and showing Cattle and hogs in 4h and being involved in FFA and have 2 daughters that have carried that tradition in animal organizations. My father has as always had a strong background in animal husbandry and to this day still has a passion with working with his horses on a daily basis and in his younger years worked at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center Nebraska. Those experiences are not unlike many greyhound family operations in rural Kansas. My family has employed 4 Kansas State University veterinarian graduates to our greyhound operation over the years and we have carried a worldwide reputation as a breeding facility. Our investments to better canine care extend beyond the farms and track care. The NGA has invested over 200 thousand in vaccine development through Kansas State University and as well as initiated our DNA program through KSU. In 2019, farms participated in conjunction with local veterinarians and multiple universities through KSU to researching better worming treatment. These are investment that benefit all canines.

Opponents of greyhound racing for years has highlighted that it is a dying sport, often sighting and often reported that greyhound racing is banned in 42 states. In fact, many states never had racing to begin with, because they prohibited all pari-mutuel wagering. Greyhound racing remains legal in 49 states with many states having popular amateur racing and coursing events through various clubs and associations. This was strongly pointed out in a 2018 statement by the Chairman of Association of Racing Commissioners International in response to false reporting and campaigning

to try and ban greyhound racing. The Chairman in his statement responding to a campaign flyer, stated “Recipients were told in the very first line of the report: “Greyhound racing is illegal in 39 states.” In fact, live Greyhound racing is illegal in only one state, Idaho (simulcasting of greyhound racing is however legal and conducted as is live horse racing and simulcasting).” This statement is important to note because the ARCI is the governing group that create the rules, oversee and regulate racing around the world.

The retired NGA registered greyhound has become a pet phenomenon. When other farms in Kansas and I host organized events and give tours of farms to Adoption leaders every year, you feel the excitement of the work that has been done for the retired greyhound and certainly don't get the sense of greyhounds being rescued. More than a hundred experienced adoption groups, including those directly involved in Kansas have come out in support of racing possibly returning to our state. They can attest to the care and an understanding of how racing life of highly socialized animal translates into homes. Along with NGA policies, most of these groups diligently make sure no retired greyhound will ever end up in a shelter after being adopted because prospective homes are completely vetted prior to placement. Popularity in the retired racing greyhound is further proven by the many groups reporting waiting lists of approved vetted homes and the importing of greyhounds from other countries to the US to serve public demand for retired racers.

Thank You

I would appreciate any questions.