



GREYHOUND RACING
January 2023

FOHO WV
Position Paper

West Virginia is the last state to allow greyhound racing! Sadly, there are two tracks left in all of America and they are in West Virginia. It's time for West Virginia to join the 42 states that have banned this inhumane 'sport' by making it illegal!

Greyhounds have been abused at West Virginia racetracks for decades. The nonprofit greyhound protection organization GREY2K USA has reported, "greyhounds at West Virginia dog tracks endure lives of confinement, and many suffer terrible injuries."

Similar to conditions at puppy mills (see position paper on commercial breeders at www.fohowv.org) the conditions at greyhound racing kennels are deplorable.

It is time to end greyhound racing in West Virginia, finally and forever!

\$17 million dollar subsidy mandated yearly to breeders!

Greyhounds are kept confined often up to 23 hours a day, in stacked cages which are barely large enough for them to stand up or turn around. They are “turned out” out in groups to relieve themselves; but most of their days, weeks, months, and years are spent in their solitary cages.

GREY2K USA also found that since 2008, there were more than 10,000 injuries with more than 500 greyhounds dying. A greyhound dies every month in WV! The type of injuries reported at WV racetracks are broken legs, spinal cord injuries, cardiac arrests and broken necks.

Additionally, the West Virginia Racing Commission has issued at least 800 disciplinary rulings against greyhound licensees just since 2008. Documented violations include dogs testing positive for drugs, humans testing positive for drugs and altercations between licensees.

To keep costs at a minimum for owners, the dogs are provided little, if any, veterinary care. Additionally, they are fed poor quality food, referred to as 4-D meat. Such meat is from dead, downed, diseased, and dying animals and is used by the greyhound industry because it is cheap.

What happens to the dogs?

Many greyhound puppies must be bred to produce winners in greyhound racing. No one knows exactly what happens to the unlucky ones who are not able to perform.

It has long been believed that unwanted puppies as well as unprofitable racers may be sold or shipped overseas to countries like Ireland, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom; or abandoned to die of starvation. Historically, some were sold to labs for experimentation. However, with the reduction in nationwide racing, the cruelty of the unwanted surplus has diminished. We are looking forward to the day when this industry no longer exists at all.

The fortunate ones are released to rescue groups that find homes for them. While there are greyhound rescues across the country, there are less than in the past with the reduction in greyhound racing nationwide. Greyhounds, like all dogs, are simply wishing for their forever home and family.

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The Federation of Humane Organizations of West Virginia, INC. website promoting animal welfare throughout the state.

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Endnotes: Much of the information within was taken from GREY2K USA website archive page. FOHO WV has been an opponent of Greyhound Racing for many years. All the views expressed here are fully supported by us!

Greyhound Racing is cruel, both to the dogs and to the rabbits used as lures in training.

There's another category of animals whose lives are doomed by the greyhound racing industry. Rabbits and other small animals are often used to train young greyhounds. They become lures and are killed by the dogs when caught.

Animal cruelty is simply not to be tolerated. Whenever we witness animal cruelty, we must do something about it or we become part of the cruelty itself. WV has laws that protect animals from cruel acts.

WV Code 61-8-19. Cruelty to animals; penalties; exclusions. “(a) If any person cruelly mistreats, abandons or withholds proper sustenance, including food, water, shelter that protects from the elements of weather or medical treatment, necessary to sustain normal health and fitness or to end suffering or abandons any animal to die, or intentionally, knowingly or recklessly leaves an animal unattended and confined in a motor vehicle when physical injury to or death of the animal is likely to result, or rides an animal when it is physically unfit, or baits or harasses any animal for the purpose of making it perform for a person’s amusement, or cruelly chains or tethers any animal or uses, trains or possesses any domesticated animal for the purpose of seizing, detaining or maltreating any other domesticated animal, he or she is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not less than three hundred nor more than two thousand dollars or confined in jail not more than six months, or both. (b) If any person intentionally tortures, or mutilates or maliciously kills an animal, or causes, procures or authorizes any other person to torture, mutilate or maliciously kill an animal, he or she is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be confined in a correctional facility not less than one nor more than five years and be fined not less than one thousand dollars nor more than five thousand dollars. For the purposes of this subsection, ‘torture’ means an action taken for the primary purpose of inflicting pain.”

FOHO WV CONCLUDES

The majority of West Virginians want greyhound racing to end yet gambling revenues from video and table games that would ordinarily go to the state treasury go to the breeders of winning greyhounds. This revenue could better be used to serve the citizens of West Virginia and not the breeders, who often are not residents of the state. In essence then, the taxpayers of West Virginia are supporting greyhound racing even if they are not aware they are and the majority do not approve of it. Every year greyhound breeders in West Virginia receive \$17 million in subsidies, funds that could otherwise be used for vital state programs like fixing our roads or substance abuse treatment or perhaps toward a veterinary program at one of the state universities; a program that is vitally needed.

Here's our idea. Just remove the subsidy and let the industry make it on their own. Uncouple the state from the greyhound industry. There is a reason that every other state has done so but West Virginia. It is controversial, unpopular and simply not good business.

Greyhound Racing is a dying industry. Gambling at WV racetracks has declined by 57% from 2010 to 2023. Even the company, Delaware North operating both racetracks would like to see it ended. It's time for the West Virginia government to separate itself from greyhound racing to end this cruelty and direct that \$17 million dollars elsewhere!

Greyhound Racing must end!

Source:

Much of the information for this article was taken from <https://www.grey2kusa.org/about/states/wv.php>