

# GREY2K USA WORLDWIDE



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April 9, 2026

The Honorable Marvin Abney, Chair  
House Finance Committee  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Testimony in support of H8217 (greyhound simulcasting)

Dear Chair Abney,

On behalf of our more than 300,000 supporters, I am writing in support of H8217, which will end greyhound simulcast wagering in Rhode Island. I would also like to thank Representative Serpa for introducing this legislation. This is a common sense bill that will help greyhounds, and close a loophole that was left in the law when greyhound racing was outlawed in Rhode Island.

In 2010, the General Assembly overwhelmingly voted to prohibit greyhound racing in Rhode Island. Ending the simulcasting of greyhound racing is consistent with the policy set by the legislature 16 years ago.

Greyhound racing is now illegal in 44 states and there are only two dog tracks left in the United States, both located in West Virginia and owned by Delaware North. Racing at these two final facilities only continues because of a state law that mandates greyhound racing, and subsidizes breeders with \$17 million in funds that could otherwise be used for vital public services. Greyhound racing is a dying industry.

Delaware North has publicly stated that it supports ending greyhound racing, and there is an ongoing debate in West Virginia about the future of dog racing. The debate there is similar to legislative deliberations that occurred in Rhode Island two decades ago. Just as it was inevitable that greyhound racing would end in Rhode Island, it is inevitable that this West Virginia legislation will eventually pass.

Federal legislation to prohibit greyhound racing nationwide is also pending in Congress, with dozens of bipartisan cosponsors. A federal ban on dog racing was approved as an amendment to the Farm Bill on March 4, and the underlying legislation is expected to receive a full House vote in the coming weeks.

For these reasons, greyhound simulcast wagering is not a stable source of revenue for Twin River Casino. Nor is it a significant source of revenue. The overwhelming majority (60%) of simulcast bets in Rhode Island are placed on horse races, not greyhounds. Since 2018, greyhound simulcast betting in Rhode Island has fallen by 30%, and in 2024 amounted to only \$5.6 million. Most of these dollars are immediately returned to gamblers in winnings, and the state receives little revenue.

This bill is not an attack on Twin River. We believe it may help the casino to have certainty on when greyhound simulcasting ends. When greyhound simulcasting ends in Rhode Island, some of the wagers now placed on dog races will naturally migrate to horse racing. This will mitigate the potential loss of revenue to Twin River. Although the data on this trend is relatively new, horse simulcast wagering clearly increased after greyhound simulcasting ended in Colorado and Massachusetts.

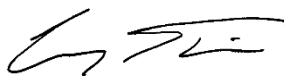
Since 2022, bills to outlaw greyhound simulcast wagering have passed in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Kansas, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Oregon. Some of these new laws are already in force, others are phase outs between 2027 and 2029. When they all take effect, greyhound simulcast betting will only be legal in 14 states. Greyhound simulcast wagering is illegal in every New England state except Rhode Island and Connecticut, and Connecticut lawmakers recently passed legislation virtually identical to H8217 out of committee.

Rhode Island has a proud tradition of leading on animal welfare issues, and should not be one of the last states to allow gambling on cruel dog races. When greyhound racing existed in Rhode Island, there were significant animal welfare problems. Greyhounds endured lives of confinement, and many dogs suffered injuries including broken legs, paralysis and death from cardiac arrest. These same problems persist at the final greyhound tracks in West Virginia. In 2024, 487 greyhound injuries were reported at Wheeling and Mardi Gras, including 162 dogs that suffered broken bones and thirteen greyhounds that died.

Americans love dogs. They are members of our families, and that's why the effort to phase out greyhound racing has been remarkably bipartisan. During a time of division in our country, this is an issue that unites us. It's also an issue that Rhode Island led the way on, when the legislature adopted the policy that greyhound racing should be prohibited. The bill that banned dog racing in Rhode Island was overwhelmingly approved by this legislature, passing the House 64-4 and the Senate 34-0. It is inconsistent with this policy, and our shared values about the humane treatment of animals, to allow wagering on inhumane greyhound races to continue.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this good proposal. I ask for your support of H8217, and your help in closing this loophole.

Sincerely,



Carey M. Theil  
Executive Director