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National group campaigning to end Greyhound racing in Iowa

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DUBUQUE (KWWL) -- Animal advocacy groups nationwide are joining with Iowa dog lovers to launch a statewide campaign to shut down Iowa's greyhound industry. It's an issue that resurfaced this winter while legislature was in session. Now some activists are planning a full-fledged effort to eliminate greyhound racing as early as the next year's session.

Dubuque is one of two greyhound race tracks in Iowa. As you may remember, in September we reported that the Dubuque Racing Association signed a 5 year deal that will keep racing in Dubuque for the time being.

Under that agreement officials with Dubuque Greyhound Park and Mystique Casino cannot comment on matters involving the topic. Thursday one group releasing a report detailing what they're calling inhumane conditions and weak financial viability of greyhound racing here in Iowa.

"Greyhound racing has been on our radar for awhile because it is a sport that provides, discomfort and death to too many dogs," Senior Director of the American Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Ann Church said.

Church is Iowa this week campaigning against greyhound racing.

"What's happening to these dogs is not right. It's not how lowans would treat their own dogs," Church said.

This week Grey2K USA, a group that is strongly against racing, released an alarming report. Their records show that 530 greyhounds were injured at Iowa racetracks since 2006. Nearly 100 of those injuries were fatal or required euthanasia.

The report further details inhumane conditions such as dogs being confined to small cages, fed meat from diseased animals to reduce costs, and racing in extreme weather conditions.

"Now there's only two tracks there used to be three one of the ones in Waterloo went bankrupt. Now the two that are left are being subsidized by the casinos," Church said.

Despite active greyhound adoption programs, especially in Dubuque, the national groups disagree and want racing to come to an end.

"We know and they know that it's inevitable that dog racing is going to end. The question is: when is it going to end. Is it going to end soon so that the dogs don't have to go through all the suffer or is it going to continue for the next 5 to 10 years while?" Church said.

Keep in mind Iowa is one of only seven states that still have operational dog tracks. Eleven states have banned greyhound racing.

State representative Mary Mascher says she strongly supports a campaign to end

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greyhound racing in Iowa. She plans to introduce legislation in January. According to the Iowa Greyhound Racing Association greyhound racing supports more than 1,300 jobs in Iowa. There are more than 350 owners and 70 farms in 30 Iowa counties.

Online Reporter: [Lauren Squires](#)

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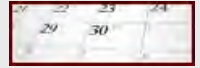
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