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GREY2K USA

June 23, 2010

The Hon. Senator Steven A. Baddour
State Senate
State House, Room 208
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Baddour,

In the coming days, the Senate will consider an amendment (Amendment 111) that would extend simulcast wagering at racetracks. Generally speaking, we have no opposition to an extension of simulcasting. However, there appears to be a misunderstanding regarding whether this extension will also allow simulcast gambling on greyhound racing.

As you know, in 2008 voters overwhelmingly approved a measure to prohibit gambling on greyhound racing. This measure appeared on the ballot as Question 3, and took effect on January 1 of this year. The plain language of Question 3 prohibits simulcast greyhound wagering, in addition to live dog racing. Specifically, the Greyhound Protection Act states that “no dog racing or ***racing meeting where any form of betting or wagering on the speed or ability of dogs occurs*** shall be conducted or permitted in this commonwealth” (emphasis added). Clearly, the four racetracks are now conducting racing meetings where a form of wagering – simulcasting – on the speed or ability of dogs is occurring.

As an olive branch to racetrack workers, we agreed not to oppose a temporary extension of the simulcasting laws, including greyhound simulcasting. However, a permanent extension of greyhound simulcasting would violate Question 3. Further, as a state we should not be supporting greyhound races, regardless of where they take place.

Finally, ending simulcast wagering on greyhound races would not be a hardship for local racetracks. According to data obtained from the State Racing Commission, in 2008 horse-based simulcast wagers accounted for nearly 90% of all simulcast bets placed.

In recent days, we have attempted to negotiate a compromise with the sponsors of Amendment 111, and have even offered to accept an additional one-year extension of greyhound simulcasting, as long as the law is clarified and there is a definite end date for greyhound simulcasting. Unfortunately, we have been unable to reach such a compromise. Attached, you will find language for a further amendment that would resolve these concerns.

Unless this further amendment language is adopted, we urge you to uphold the will of the voters and **OPPOSE** Amendment 111 and any other proposal to extend simulcasting.

Sincerely,

Christine A. Dorchak
President & General Counsel

PROTECTING GREYHOUNDS NATIONWIDE

P.O. Box 442117
Somerville, MA 02144
866-247-3925 ♦ 617-666-3568 (fax)
www.grey2kusa.org
info@grey2kusa.org