

Ms Jennifer Howard MP
Chair, Agriculture and Environment Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane QLD 4000

aec@parliament.qld.gov.au

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Dear Ms Howard

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission on the Racing Integrity Bill 2015. I would like to add my voice to the chorus of concerned members of the Queensland community who are alarmed by the significant animal welfare issues associated with the greyhound racing industry.

I am a volunteer for a greyhound rescue group, one of many non-industry aligned greyhound rescue groups that has sprung up across Australia, established as a consequence of the huge number of greyhounds killed as a 'byproduct' of the racing industry. These groups are staffed by everyday people who believe that greyhounds deserve to live out their days as a pet and are desperate to rehome as many dogs as possible. Sadly, the reality is that despite the best efforts of rescue groups, the number of dogs rehomed each year pales in comparison with the number of dogs euthanised.

I would like to commend the Queensland Government on the steps it took following the live baiting scandal in 2015, first establishing the Queensland Greyhound Racing Industry Commission of Inquiry and then by acting on the recommendations of the Commission, by introducing this Bill to implement the first three recommendations of the report.

However although the Bill is a step in the right direction, given entrenched animal welfare issues within the industry, much more needs to be done. I was alarmed by remarks made by the former Racing Minister, Mr Bill Byrne MP, in his explanatory speech in December 2015, who stated that "the government is committed to ensuring that the racing industry is prosperous and sustainable in the future and that public confidence is restored to the fullest extent possible". To believe that it is possible for the Government to support a prosperous racing industry while also claiming to support animal welfare is to completely misunderstand the level of cruelty within this industry. Overbreeding, euthanasia, live baiting and inhumane treatment are rampant.

I personally have two rescued greyhounds who were both dumped at the age of two to be put down despite being young dogs with no injuries, no health problems whatsoever and no behavioural issues. There are simply so many greyhounds bred that if a dog doesn't 'chase' their days are numbered. The heartbreaking reality for rescuers is that only a lucky few can be saved. To hold the view that the Government can work to further a "prosperous" industry flies in the face of this reality – that the industry simply would not be profitable if industry participants actually took responsibility for rehoming all the unwanted dogs.

Noting that the other recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry's report have been accepted by the Government, I am hopeful that they will be implemented in full in the near future, and that meaningful change will occur within the industry.

Regards,

Eve Gibson

Fairfield Qld 4103