

Agriculture and Environment Committee

From: Stephanie Houghton [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 26 January 2016 11:36 PM
To: Agriculture and Environment Committee
Subject: Enquiry into the Racing Integrity Bill

Dear Sir

I am a concerned greyhound participant and is supportive of change and improvements to Integrity, Welfare and Management of our Industry.

I am supportive of the new Racing Integrity Bill, however I am concerned that the changes to Animal Welfare and its Integrity issues do not go far enough in Greyhound Racing. Currently persons who have been charged with "Animal Cruelty" after serving a disqualification period are allowed to reapply for renewal of Licence to keep and train Greyhounds returning to the Industry. As an ex-Chairperson of the Greyhound Industry I have knowledge and experience in this matter and have evidence which clearly indicate, "Leopards never change their spots" therefore a disqualified licensee for animal cruelty should in my opinion not be re-licensed again in the Greyhound sport

The sport needs to move forward without these individuals and I hope this Enquiry can make the appropriate changes to ensure the integrity of Greyhound racing is maintained by the removal of persons who cannot meet a high level of animal welfare.

The Queensland Greyhound Industry has been let down by continuous State Governments over the past 20 years. The withholding of Industry turnover has not allowed the Industry to prosper nor has the understanding of the need for safe racing tracks, which in turn provides for safe racing of our animals which help to minimize animal welfare issues.

Many greyhound participants have raised integrity and welfare concerns over the years, yet there is plenty of evidence available: Racing Queensland, Politicians from both sides have conveniently forgotten these meetings, emails, phone contact etc. one has only to refer to the "four Corners" program recently when everybody from the Chairman of Racing Queensland down denied any knowledge of any information regarding animal welfare etc. had been provided to them. I personally have many letters provided to them of such actions as recorded.

The recommendations from the MacSporran report as to the 7 member All Codes Board appointment I cannot support. I had a lengthy discussion with Mr Mac Sporrán regarding this. I am in support of the three codes remaining amalgamated, further 7 appointees to the Board I am in support of, but I do not support the breakup of the applicants. Racing is a very different sport while the Administration of each code is compatible the actual racing is not. Therefore 4 appointees with no connection to racing, no knowledge of actual racing, no knowledge of the individual animals, no knowledge of rules of racing, no knowledge of integrity, marketing clubs, training of animals, owners, breeders, and finally the gambling side of the industry which is where the revenue which determines if the industry prospers or fails is in my opinion is a disaster about to happen. I had hoped we had learned from the current disaster costing the industry a fortune to try to rectify the many errors of poor judgement.

My breakup of the numbers would be:

Independent Chairman no ties to racing – no ownership of any animals in sport strict business acumen and suitable Tertiary Qualifications.

Deputy Chairman – from the Gallops industry Business experience suitable Tertiary Qualifications Racing Experience Committee –

1 experienced Gallops person Business experience suitable Tertiary Qualifications Gallop Racing experience

2 experienced Greyhound persons Business experience suitable Tertiary Qualifications and greyhound Racing Experience

2 experienced Harness persons Business experience suitable Tertiary Qualifications and Harness Racing Experience

This breakup of numbers of appointees is fair to all codes. It allows for each code to have their individual cases to be presented and discussed fairly, something that has not been happening in the past. This I see as the last throw of the dice, if these appointments are not seen to be fairly determined and not "a furlong in front" as a certain Racing Minister was quoted in the press.

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