

Republic of the Philippines
Congress of the Philippines
SENATE
Pasay, Manila

**In Re: House Bill No. 5291
Entitled “An Act Granting The Fox
New Millennium Amusement Club
Inc. (FNMACI) A Franchise to
Construct, Operate and maintain
Greyhound Racetrack in Any Place
Within the City of Mandaue, Province
of Cebu”**

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**THE PHILIPPINE ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY (PAWS)’S
POSITION PAPER/OPPOSITION TO GREYHOUND RACING**

The Philippine Animal Welfare Society (hereinafter, “PAWS”), through undersigned PAWS Program Director, Anna Hashim-Cabrera, respectfully submits this Position Paper/Opposition to House Bill No. 5291 proposed by House Representatives Salimbangon, Soon-Ruiz and Biron per Committee Report No. 1393, based on the following grounds:

**GREYHOUND RACING IS CRUEL: IT WILL LEAD TO MASSIVE
GREYHOUND BREEDING AND KILLINGS**

The new industry of greyhound racing will trigger the breeding of hundreds of greyhounds, more than it can place at race tracks. Racing aficionados will be motivated to produce “winning” dogs and will end up overbreeding them.

This is an inevitable scenario as can be shown in euthanasia statistics in countries which already have greyhound racing.

In the United States, approximately 20,000 surplus greyhounds are destroyed each year because they have been deemed unfit to race and because there are not enough homes for the retired dogs.

To illustrate just how many retired dogs that the Philippines would be dealing with, consider this: A greyhound's racing career is usually over at 3.5 to 4 years of age, and yet, its life expectancy is about 13 years old.

Add this to the Philippine scenario where there is already an alarming rate of homeless dogs due to unregulated breeding of purebred dogs, and the lack of government-funded spay-neuter programs to prevent overpopulation of the "native" dogs or regular "aspins" ("Asong Pinoys", formerly called "askals"), House Bill 5291 will exponentially increase the current dog population of an estimated 9.6MM.

At present, one-third of this estimated dog population (3.2MM) are strays or homeless. Each barangay or city is already grappling with problems of how to "get rid" of unclaimed impounded dogs.

PAWS has been receiving dozens of reports from concerned citizens in cities and municipalities who have resorted to poisoning, drowning gassing or simply selling off the dogs to the illegal dog meat trade because do not how to humanely dispose of them. Many have no budgets for the purchase of barbiturates for the proper euthanasia of these unwanted animals

With less than five (5) BAI-accredited non-government-funded animal shelters all over the Philippines, the PAWS Animal Shelter among them, the country needs to put some serious thought into the effective prevention of pet overpopulation or surplus animals. Currently, without the Greyhound Racing Industry, we already have a problem that is not being addressed – unregulated breeding of purebred dogs and non-availability and non-affordability of spay-neuter surgeries which will prevent every pet dog of each Filipino family from producing at least three (3) puppies per year.

With the greyhound racing factored in, greyhounds will be bred excessively leading to more unwanted or un-"rehomeable" dogs who will be victims of cruelty, neglect and not even afforded the proper euthanasia by cities or by the government agencies which will later on be collecting them for 'disposal'.

GREYHOUND RACING CANNOT BE OPERATED IN A HUMANE MANNER

The reason why the greyhound racing industry is inherently cruel is because it treats dogs as commodities. It is a form of gaming in which the amount of money a dog generates determines his or her expendability.

As a result, the following cruelties have been commonly observed in racing greyhounds' kennels or facilities in developed countries – those with strict animal welfare laws like the United States:

- Greyhounds are kept at track kennels in stacked cages, often muzzled, for a total of 18 to 22 hours per day.
- Many tracks use wooden crates which get soaked in urine, making sanitary conditions difficult
- Greyhound adoption groups regularly report that incoming greyhounds suffer from an incredible variety of afflictions. Untreated conditions and injuries such as missing or broken toes, broken hocks and incredible internal (whipworms, hookworms, tapeworms, coccidia and giardia) and external (fleas, ticks, mites) parasites are common. Teeth and gums frequently show advanced signs of neglect-related disease and wear, attributable to diet, as well as stress-related trauma from chewing on available materials in the environment (stress/boredom precipitated).
- Dogs are routinely fed “4-D Meat” the meat of dead, diseased, dying or downed (unable to walk) animals deemed unfit for human consumption by the USDA. The micro-pathogen, drug and diseased laden meat can cause the dogs to become ill. The meat is used because it is cheap.

Source: www.greyhounds.org
<http://www.greyhounds.org/gpl/contents/common.html>

GREYHOUND RACING IS IMMORAL AND UNETHICAL BY ITS VERY NATURE – THE REASON WHY IT IS BEING BOYCOTTED AND STRONGLY OPPOSED BY MANY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

House Bill No. 5291 is proposing that we create a whole new profit-driven industry based on assumption of ‘expendable’ lives.

To allow a cycle of breeding and then mercilessly killing thousands of dogs “not being good enough to race” in the name of gambling and entertainment is morally inexcusable.

There is no need for the Philippines to adopt immoral and unethical practices being criticized by a growing number of informed citizens all over the world.

It will be a blight on our national image to introduce this form of animal cruelty as an acceptable and legal practice in our country.

Further, greyhound racing is not in line with the spirit or rationale within which the Philippine Animal Welfare Act (Republic Act 8485) - a law which PAWS has strongly lobbied for – was passed by our lawmakers in 1998.

The law was passed not solely for the well-being of animals alone but because of the conviction that a nation's concern for its animals reflect the psyche of its people. Where people are conscious of preventing all forms of cruelty, its society is more harmonious, peaceful and more progressive.

Mahatma Gandhi, one of the greatest Philosophers of our time, put it succinctly when he said that “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”

Promoting a humane society by rule of law or reflecting the state of our society by putting this principle into a law was deemed important enough to merit the passage of Southeast Asia's very first national Animal Welfare Act.

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, it is respectfully prayed that **House Bill No. 5291** be outright rejected and not passed into law for it introduces the cruel, inhumane, immoral and unethical “sport” that is Greyhound Racing.

Quezon City for Pasay City, 26 June 2009.

THE PHILIPPINE ANIMAL WELFARE SOCIETY

87 Small Horseshoe Drive, New Manila, Quezon City 1112

By:

ANNA HASHIM-CABRERA

Program Director

