

Florida Amendment 13, Ban on Wagering on Dog Races Amendment (2018)

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Florida Amendment 13



Election date

[November 6, 2018](#)

Topic

[Gambling](#) and [Treatment of animals](#)

Status

Pending judicial review

Type

[Commission-referral](#)

Origin

[Legislative commission](#)

Florida Amendment 13, the Ban on Wagering on Dog Races Amendment, may appear on the [ballot](#) in [Florida](#) as a [commission referral](#) on [November 6, 2018](#).^[1]

A "yes" vote supports banning gambling on dog races, including greyhound races.

A "no" vote opposes banning gambling on dog races, including greyhound races.

On August 1, 2018, Judge Karen Gievers [ruled that the amendment must be taken off the ballot](#). In her order, she wrote, "Contrary to the words presented for consideration by the voters, the amendment would not end dog racing, nor would it eliminate wagering on dog racing. In short, proposed Amendment 13 is misleading and inaccurate and incomplete, while adding up to a 'hide the ball,' 'fly a false flag' and outright 'trickery'."^[2] On August 2, 2018, the state's chief deputy solicitor general appealed the decision, which also put an automatic stay on the case, meaning that the measure could still appear on the ballot. Parties to the case requested the matter be heard in the [Florida Supreme Court](#) and requested an

expedited hearing process so that the case could be decided before mail-in ballots are due to be sent out on September 22, 2018. On August 7, 2018, the Florida Supreme Court agreed to hear the case. Arguments are set for August 29, 2018.^{[3][4]}

Overview

[How did this measure get on the ballot?](#)

The [Florida Constitution Revision Commission \(CRC\)](#) voted 27-10 to place Amendment 13 on the ballot for the election. The 37-member commission, which meets every 20 years to propose changes to the [Florida Constitution](#), is unique amongst the states. Florida is the only state with a commission empowered to refer constitutional amendments to the ballot. Republicans, including legislative leaders and [Gov. Rick Scott](#), appointed 33 of the commissioners. [Attorney General Pam Bondi](#) (R) also served on the commission. [Jorge Labarga](#), chief justice of the [Florida Supreme Court](#), appointed the three remaining members.

[What would the ballot measure change?](#)

Beginning on January 1, 2021, Amendment 13 would prohibit pari-mutuel (a type of betting pool) operations from racing greyhounds or any other dogs for wagering. The measure would also prohibit persons in the state from wagering on the outcome of live dog races occurring in the state. Amendment 13 would authorize the [Florida State Legislature](#) to specify civil or criminal penalties for violating the constitutional amendment.^[11]

[What is the status of dog racing in the United States?](#)

As of 2018, Florida was one of 10 states where wagering on dog races is legal. However, in just six states, including Florida, are there operating dog racing tracks for gambling. Neighboring Alabama also has active race dog racing tracks in 2018. The remaining 40 states had prohibited wagering on dog races.^[5] In 1931, the Florida State Legislature passed a law to allow wagering on horse racing and dog racing.^[6]

[Who is behind the campaigns for and against Amendment 13?](#)

[How current is this campaign finance information?](#)

Two committees are registered to support this initiative: Protect Dogs (Yes on 13) and the Committee to Protect Greyhounds. The committees reported a combined total of \$485,123 in contributions and \$61,072 in expenditures. The top three donors to the support campaign include GREY2K USA Worldwide (\$176,413), K-M Revocable Trust (\$50,000), and GREY2K USA Education Fund (\$50,000). GREY2K USA is a non-profit that, according to its website, works "to pass stronger greyhound protection laws" and "promote the rescue and adoption of greyhounds."^{[7][8]}

One committee is registered to oppose the measure: the Committee to Support Greyhounds. The committee reported a total of \$34,793 in contributions and \$21,905 in expenditures. The top donors include Gary Keller (\$10,000), Timothy Ertl (\$2,500), and S. L. Raines (\$1,800).^[7]

Text of the measure

Ballot title

The ballot title was as follows:^[1]

“ ENDS DOG RACING.^[9] ”

Ballot summary

The ballot summary was as follows:^[1]

“ Phases out commercial dog racing in connection with wagering by 2020. Other gaming activities are not affected.^[9] ”

Constitutional changes

See also: [Florida Constitution](#)

Amendment 13 would add a new section to [Article X](#) and a new section to [Article XII](#) of the [Florida Constitution](#)

Support

Protect Dogs- Yes on 13 is leading the campaign in support of this amendment. Protect Dogs- Yes on 13 describes itself as "a grassroots campaign working to end the cruelty of greyhound racing in Florida."^[10]

On its website, Protect Dogs- Yes on 13 wrote:^[11]

“ Greyhounds are at a disadvantage even before they are born. Thousands are bred annually—many more than are needed to race—in an attempt to create the fastest dogs. These social dogs are forced to spend most of their time alone, confined in warehouse-style kennels with rows of double –stacked cages for 20-23 hours a day. Many racing dogs suffer injuries while racing, and according to state records a racing greyhound dies every three days on a Florida track. Eleven of the remaining 17 greyhound racetracks in the country are in Florida. ... Dog racing is out of sync with society’s values toward animals. Today this kind of wasteful and needless suffering is rejected as a form of gambling or entertainment. According to government records now available, common racing injuries include broken necks and broken backs, dislocations, torn muscles, and paralysis. Electrocutions have also occurred when dogs make contact with a track’s high voltage lure. Some dogs die on the racetrack while others are put down due to the severity of their injuries, or simply because of their diminished value as racers.^[9] ”

Supporters

Supporters of Amendment 13 include the following:^[12]

Organizations

- Grey2K USA Worldwide
- Committee to Protect Greyhounds
- The Greater Tarpon Springs Democratic Club
- OurRev305 of Miami
- First Congregational United Church of Christ in Ocala
- Animal Welfare League of Charlotte County
- Edgewater Animal Shelter
- Southeast Volusia Humane Society
- The Animal Legal Defense Fund
- Pets Ad Litem
- Imagine Our Florida Inc.

Elected officials

- Florida Sen. [Tom Lee](#) (R-20), the [Florida Constitutional Commission member](#) that sponsored the measure
- Florida Sen. [Dana Young](#) (R-18)^[12]
- Florida Sen. [Darryl Rouson](#) (D-19), a [Florida CRC member](#)
- Former Florida Sen. [Don Gaetz](#) (R-1), a [Florida CRC member](#)
- Former Florida Sen. [Lisa Carlton](#) (R-24), a [Florida CRC member](#)
- Former Florida Sen. [Eleanor Sobel](#) (D-33)
- Former Florida Sen. [Maria Sachs](#) (D-34)
- Former Sewall's Point mayor [Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch](#) (R)

Individuals

- Brecht Heuchan, a political consultant and lobbyist based in [Tallahassee, Florida](#)

Arguments

- **Florida Sen. [Dana Young](#) (R-18)** said, "It's time for Florida to move beyond mandated greyhound racing."^[12]
- **Carey Theil, co-founder of Grey2K USA**, an organization opposed to greyhound racing, said, "Commercial greyhound racing is cruel and inhumane. Every three days, a greyhound dies at a Florida dog track. Greyhounds endure lives of confinement, and many suffer serious injuries."^[13]
- **Kate MacFall, the Florida director of The Humane Society of the United States**, issued a statement regarding a [lawsuit](#) filed by the president of the Florida Greyhound Association, in which she indicated her support for Amendment 13 by saying, "This lawsuit is dead on arrival. It is a desperate attempt to prevent voters from having a voice on whether greyhound confinement and deaths should continue. It was filed because greyhound breeders know that when Amendment 13 appears on the ballot, Floridians will vote yes for the dogs."

Opposition

Support Greyhounds is leading the campaign in opposition to this amendment. Support Greyhounds describes its mission as, "preserving the proud tradition of Florida greyhound racing and educating the public about these amazing athletes and pets."^[16]

Opponents

- A.J. Grant, owner of a kennel that supplies greyhounds to the Sanford-Orlando Kennel Club^[13]
- The Florida Greyhound Association
- James Blanchard, president of the Florida Greyhound Association, who filed a [lawsuit](#) against [Florida Secretary of State Ken Detzner](#) arguing that the amendment's ballot title and summary are inaccurate and misleading and do not inform voters of the true effects of the measure
- Greyhound Adopters for Racing^[17]

The following greyhound adoption groups oppose the amendment:^[17]

- ACT Greyhounds
- Adopt A Greyhound Atlanta
- Adoptable Greyhounds of Florida
- Alabama Greyhound Rescue and Adoption Center
- Allies for Greyhounds
- Arizona Adopt A Greyhound
- Awesome Greyhound Adoptions
- Bay Area Greyhound Adoptions
- Bluegrass Greyhound Adoption
- Box to the Wire Greyhound Adoptions
- California Greyhound Adoption Promotion
- Camp Greyhound
- Crazy for Greyhounds Adoptions
- Everything Grey Greyhound Haven
- Everything Greyt
- Fast Friends Greyhound Adoption Sarasota
- FastK9's Greyhound Adoption
- Forever Home Greyhound Adoption
- Gemini's Pampered Greyhounds
- God's Greys Greyhound Group
- Greyed A Greyhound Assistance and Placement Services
- Greyhound Action League of Buffalo
- Greyhound Adoption of Ohio
- Greyhound Angels Adoption of New Jersey
- Greyhound Crossroads
- Greyhound Friends of North Carolina
- Greyhound Pet Adoption of Florida Southeast
- GPA Massachusetts Adoption Center
- GPA Tampa Bay
- Greyhound Pets of Arizona
- Greyhound Placement Service of New Hampshire
- Greyhound Rescue Foundation of Tennessee
- Greyhound Rescue of New York
- Greyhound Support Transport
- Greyhounds As Pets of Northeast Florida
- Greyhounds Pets of Atlantic Canada

- Greytful Hearts Greyhound Rescue
- GST's Sun State Greyhound Adoption
- Halfway Home Greyhound Adoption
- Hounds of the Heartland
- Iowa Greyhound Park Adoption Program
- It's a Grey Area Greyhound Adoption
- Keystone Greyhounds
- Northern Greyhound Adoptions
- Northern Lights Greyhound Adoption
- Northern Sky Greyhound League
- Northwest Canadian Greyhound League
- Paws on the Mountain Greyhound Adoption
- Personalized Greyhounds
- PRO Greyhound
- Project Racing Home Greyhound Adoptions
- Pups Without Partners Greyhound Adoption
- Pure Michigan Greyhound Adoption
- Racing Home Greyhound Adoption
- Rainbow's End Greyhound Adoption
- Running the Rail Greyhound Adoption
- Southern California Greyhound Adoption Legion
- Star City Greyhound Adoptions
- The League of Extraordinary Greyhounds
- Triangle Greyhound Society
- Wheeling Island Greyhound Adoption Center

Arguments

On its website, **Support Greyhounds** wrote:^{[18][19]}

“ The truth is Racing Greyhounds like many working breeds such as Labrador Retrievers who are used when hunting, Sled Dogs who participate in racing, horses who race or participate in show jumping, or even dogs who herd sheep or then participate in agility contests - are all animals with jobs which keep them happy, healthy, in top condition and accomplishing what they have been bred to do for centuries. ... Greyhounds are amazing athletes, working dogs who for generations have been born to run.^[9] ”

Greyhound Adopters for Racing features the following argument on its website:^[20]

“ We have each reached the conclusion, through living with our former racing Greyhounds and seeing them in their working lives at farms, training facilities and in racing kennels, that Greyhound racing is NOT “cruel and inhumane” to the Greyhounds, and should be continued, in the best longterm interests of our breed.^[9] ”

- **A.J. Grant**, owner of a kennel that supplies greyhounds to the Sanford-Orlando Kennel Club said, "We will let you in [to the facility]. You can come see for yourself. We've got nothing to hide. Don't accuse me of abusing these dogs and running them to death if you don't have any proof."^[13]

- **Jack Cory** of the Florida Greyhound Association responded to arguments of cruelty to greyhounds during transport and racing, arguing that “We probably have a better safety transportation record than Greyhound Bus Lines or than a school system or than a nursing home does. So all of the allegations by political activists are just that. They're mirrors and they're smoke and they're political activists. Athletes die. Athletes get hurt. Athletes have heart attacks after a strenuous football game or a baseball game. It happens. It's unfortunate.”^[21]

Campaign finance

See also: [Campaign finance requirements for Florida ballot measures](#)

The campaign finance information on this page is according to the [most recent scheduled reports](#), which covered through July 13, 2018. The [deadline](#) for the next scheduled reports was July 27, 2018.

Total campaign contributions:	
Support:	\$485,122.76
Opposition:	\$34,792.86

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Support

Committees in support of Amendment 13				Totals in support	
Supporting committees	Cash contributions	In-kind services	Cash ex	Total raised:	
Protect Dogs (Yes on 13)	\$457,647.00	\$24,738.26			\$485,122.76
Committee to Protect Greyhounds	\$2,250.00	\$487.50		Total spent:	\$61,071.76
Total	\$459,897.00	\$25,225.76			

Top donors

The top donors to the support campaign were as follows:^[7]

Donor	Cash	In-kind	Total
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Donor	Cash	In-kind	Total
Grey2K USA Worldwide	\$152,000.00	\$24,413.16	\$176,413.16
K-M Revocable Trust	\$50,00.00	\$0.00	\$50,000
GREY2K USA Education Fund	\$50,00.00	\$0.00	\$50,000
Animal Wellness Action	\$25,000.00	\$0.00	\$25,000.00

Opposition

Committees in opposition to Amendment 13				Totals in opposition	
Opposing committees	Cash contributions	In-kind services	Cash exp	Total raised:	
Committee to Support Greyhounds		\$21,138.86	\$13,654.00		\$34,792.86
Total		\$21,138.86	\$13,654.00	Total spent:	\$21,904.74

Top donors

The top largest donors in opposition to Amendment 13 are below:^[7]

Donor	Cash	In-kind	Total
Gary Keller	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
Timothy Ertl	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
S L Raines	\$1,800.00	\$0.00	\$1,800.00
Theresa Romano	\$501.00	\$519.00	\$1,020.00
Steve Schlachter	\$820.00	\$0.00	\$820.00