

## Amendment # 13      Title: Ends Dog Racing

**Ballot Language:** Phases out commercial dog racing in connection with wagering by 2020. Other gaming activities are not affected.

**How the Amendment Reached the Ballot:** Constitution Revision Commission (CRC)

### What your Vote Means:

**A Yes** vote: would prohibit wagering on live dog races, including greyhound races, held in Florida; and ban dog races in Florida on which there is wagering.

**A No** vote: maintains the status quo regarding commercial dog racing in Florida.

### Pro:

- **Florida Sen. Dana Young (R-18)** said, "It's time for Florida to move beyond mandated greyhound racing."<sup>2</sup>
- **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."<sup>2</sup>
- **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."<sup>2</sup>
- **The League of Women Voters of Florida** argued, "This is primarily a gambling issue, and the League has held a consistent position against gambling."<sup>2</sup>

### Con:

Excerpts from column by Marion Hammer in Sunshine State News:

- "Amendment 13 to the Florida Constitution is being characterized as an amendment to end wagering (betting) on greyhound races in Florida, but it goes much further than that."
- "If Amendment 13 is passed, extreme animal rights organizations will have a new constitutional standard to challenge any and all activities they find objectionable."
- In short, many suspect their first action will be to immediately begin work to ban all hunting and fishing.
- Amendment 13 includes the phrase: "**The humane treatment of animals is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida.**" That language will not appear on the ballot BUT IT IS IN THE AMENDMENT. (emphasis added)
- Since reasonable people don't want animals treated inhumanely, at first blush many "Floridians would agree with that statement in general terms. However, **there is a vast**

**difference between what the public believes is ‘inhumane’ and what animal rights extremists groups and their supporters would call ‘inhumane.’” (emphasis added)**

- “The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), is the lead organization pushing for Amendment 13’s passage. HSUS opposes hundreds of common and traditional activities involving animals because they claim they are ‘inhumane.’”
- “In fact, the list of activities HSUS and other animal extremist organizations find objectionable is huge and includes hunting, fishing, farming, animal husbandry, marine parks and more. That’s what this is really about.”
- “Those groups firmly believe that animals shouldn’t be owned as pets because it’s inhumane.”
- “Clearly the intent is to establish a legal foothold in the Florida Constitution that they can use to go after legitimate activities, like hunting, that these organizations don’t like.”
- “In short, Amendment 13 is not really about greyhound racing, it’s a front for much more.”
- “Whether you are voting absentee, early voting or at the polls on Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2018, vote against Amendment 13.”

<http://sunshinestatenews.com/story/oppose-constitutional-amendment-13>

The arguments against the measure are varying. Some opponents question the constitutionality and economics associated with shutting down a private industry. There are currently 12 greyhound tracks in Florida which employ roughly 3,000 Floridians. If this measure were to pass, it could threaten the livelihood of many hard-working individuals. Those opposed to this measure would cite the economic consequence – that an approval of the measure would spell dire consequences for the industry. In addition, opponents would argue that the measure is something that does not belong in the constitution – this measure can be enacted legislatively, or the industry could be further regulated by the legislature. Many have compared the current measure to the infamous “Pregnant Pig” amendment from 2002. The Florida Greyhound Association filed a lawsuit against the state alleging that the ballot language misleads voters. The ballot would make betting on dog racing illegal, but these tracks could still theoretically race dogs.<sup>1</sup>

**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."<sup>2</sup>

“On its website, **Support Greyhounds** wrote: 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.”<sup>2</sup>

**Supporters:**

USA Today’s Florida Today (Leans left)

Dem Prog Caucus of FL (Leftist)

League of Women Voters of Florida

Plus see a long list of supporters [https://ballotpedia.org/Florida\\_2018\\_ballot\\_measures](https://ballotpedia.org/Florida_2018_ballot_measures)

## **Opponents:**

Save My Constitution

The Florida Chamber of Commerce

The Florida Greyhound Association

Greyhound Adopters for Racing

Plus see a long list of opponents [https://ballotpedia.org/Florida\\_2018\\_ballot\\_measures](https://ballotpedia.org/Florida_2018_ballot_measures)

**TPM Vetter's Summary Comments:** If you like Para-mutual wagering you are not going to vote for this amendment. If you are fearful dogs are being harmed you will probably vote for the amendment. I suggest you vote no. There are adequate laws on the books to protect animals and greyhounds specifically. This could be a gateway amendment that will affect domesticated animals in other arenas.

## **TPM's Recommendation:**

Vote **NO** on Amendment 13

### **Sources:**

<sup>1</sup>The James Madison Institute 2018 Florida Amendment Guide

[https://www.jamesmadison.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018\\_Amendment\\_Guide\\_v08\\_web.pdf](https://www.jamesmadison.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018_Amendment_Guide_v08_web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Ballotpedia:

[https://ballotpedia.org/Florida\\_2018\\_ballot\\_measures](https://ballotpedia.org/Florida_2018_ballot_measures)