

3

Dog Racing

Do you approve of a law summarized below, on which no vote was taken by the Senate or the House of Representatives before May 6, 2008?

SUMMARY

As required by law, summaries are written by the State Attorney General, and the statements describing the effect of a "yes" or "no" vote are written jointly by the State Attorney General and the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

This proposed law would prohibit any dog racing or racing meeting in Massachusetts where any form of betting or wagering on the speed or ability of dogs occurs.

The State Racing Commission would be prohibited from accepting or approving any application or request for racing dates for dog racing.

Any person violating the proposed law could be required to pay a civil penalty of not less than \$20,000 to the Commission. The penalty would

be used for the Commission's administrative purposes, subject to appropriation by the state Legislature. All existing parts of the chapter of the state's General Laws concerning dog and horse racing meetings would be interpreted as if they did not refer to dogs.

These changes would take effect January 1, 2010. The proposed law states that if any of its parts were declared invalid, the other parts would stay in effect.

WHAT YOUR VOTE WILL DO

A **YES VOTE** would prohibit dog races on which betting or wagering occurs, effective January 1, 2010.

A **NO VOTE** would make no change in the laws governing dog racing.

ARGUMENTS

As provided by law, the 150-word arguments are written by proponents and opponents of each question, and reflect their opinions. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts does not endorse these arguments, and does not certify the truth or accuracy of any statement made in these arguments. The names of the individuals and organizations who wrote each argument, and any written comments by others about each argument, are on file in the Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

IN FAVOR: Dog racing is cruel and inhumane. Would you treat your dog this way?

- Thousands of Massachusetts greyhounds endure lives of confinement, kept for 20 or more hours each day in cages barely large enough to stand up or turn around in.
- According to state records more than 800 Massachusetts racing greyhounds have been injured since 2002, including dogs who suffered broken legs, paralysis and even death from cardiac arrest.
- According to the Massachusetts State Racing Commission greyhounds have recently died from a mysterious illness and tested positive for cocaine, an illegal stimulant.
- To learn more and see photographs taken by the racetracks, visit www.ProtectDogs.org.

Dogs are important in our lives and deserve protection.

Please join the MSPCA, The Humane Society of the United States, the *Springfield Republican*, every major animal shelter, dozens of lawmakers and other community leaders.

Vote "Yes" for the dogs on Question 3.

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AGAINST: Parimutuel dog racing has taken place in Massachusetts for over 70 years, now only at Wonderland dog track in Revere, and Raynham/Taunton in Raynham. The greyhounds are owned by caring dog owners, not tracks. There is no mistreatment of the dogs as claimed by animal activists. The State Racing Commission fully regulates the industry, has veterinarians on duty at each track, and maintains numerous programs for the welfare of the dogs during their racing careers, and for adoption when their careers are over. About 1,000 people will lose badly needed jobs if the proposal is enacted. The Commonwealth, Revere and Raynham will lose badly needed revenue. From 2000 to 2007, these tracks paid over \$40 million to the Commonwealth in commissions and fees, as well as other taxes related to their racing activities. Finally enactment will likely subject the Commonwealth to suits by the tracks for taking their property.

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FULL TEXT OF QUESTION ► Be it enacted by the people and their authority:

SECTION 1.

Declaration of purpose. The citizens of Massachusetts find that commercial dog racing is cruel and inhumane, and as recommended by the Humane Society of the United States, the Animal Rescue League of Boston, GREY2K USA, and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, declare that it should be prohibited in the commonwealth.

SECTION 2.

Chapter 128A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, is hereby amended by inserting after Section 14D the following section: -

Section 14E. Notwithstanding the provisions of this chapter or any general or special law to the contrary, no dog racing or racing meeting where any form of betting or wagering on the speed or ability of dogs occurs shall be conducted or permitted in this commonwealth and the

commission is hereby prohibited from accepting or approving any application or request for racing dates for dog racing.

Any person violating any provision of this section relative to dog racing shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than twenty thousand dollars which shall be payable to the commission and used for administrative purposes of the commission subject to appropriation.

All other provisions of this Chapter shall be construed as if they contain no references to dogs, dog racing or dog races.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the effective date of this section shall be January 1, 2010.

SECTION 3.

The several provisions of this Act are independent and severable and the invalidity, if any, of any part or feature thereof shall not affect or render the remainder of the Act invalid or inoperative.