

AMENDMENT 13 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

What Your Vote Means: A **Yes** vote on this measure: establishes a constitutional prohibition on the racing of and gambling on greyhounds or other dogs.

A **No** vote on this measure: maintains the status quo regarding commercial dog Racing in Florida.

Pro: Those in favor of this measure highlight the costs associated with regulating the greyhound racing industry, and the numerous concerns regarding the ethical treatment of the animals used in the industry. Proponents claim that the necessary costs of regulation exceed the tax revenue generated by dog tracks. State reports show that the greyhound racing industry saw a 50 percent decrease in revenue from a decade ago. Aside from the economics, many view this purely as an ethical issue. The living conditions of these animals create a toxic environment that can lead to serious harm. For example, animals are often subjected to damaging drugs such as cocaine and opiates (over 400 documented cases in the last decade). For these reasons, advocates of the proposal view greyhound racing as a relic of the past. The amendment phases out dog racing by 2020, but still allows people to bet on races simulcast from other states. These tracks may continue to operate more lucrative revenue streams like poker rooms and slot machines.

Con: 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.