



POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

## TV's Lou Grant urges Kansas lawmakers to reject dog-racing bill

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Ed Asner, TV's Lou Grant, is urging the Kansas Legislature to turn aside a bill that could allow slot-machine gambling at Wichita Greyhound Park as a way to try to revive dog racing in the state.

House Bill 2173 would allow a revote on whether to allow gaming machines at Greyhound Park, which has been closed since 2007. Slot machines are seen as the key to generating enough revenue to reopen the track on Sedgwick County-owned land north of the city.

Asner weighed in through a letter being distributed by the Humane Society of the United States, which opposes dog racing.

"As a proud Kansas native and animal lover, this is deeply concerning to me and many of your constituents," wrote Asner, who was raised in Kansas City, Kan. "Greyhound racing is a terribly inhumane activity that has been rejected by Kansas residents and the majority of the American public. Racing events lead to an unacceptable level of animal exploitation and suffering solely for profit."

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**GREYHOUND RACING IS A DYING INDUSTRY NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF ITS CRUEL NATURE, BUT ITS ECONOMIC FAILURE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, AND IS ILLEGAL IN 40 STATES.**

Ed Asner, actor

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“Greyhound racing is a dying industry not only because of its cruel nature, but its economic failure throughout the country, and is illegal in 40 states.”

Asner, 87, is best known for his portrayal of crusty newsman Lou Grant. A former president of the Screen Actors Guild, Asner has been active in union and progressive causes for decades.

Developer Phil Ruffin shut down the Wichita dog track after Sedgwick County voters narrowly rejected slot machines there in a double-barreled vote that also gave a thumbs down to a destination casino in the county.

Ruffin said he could not afford to keep it open with just racing revenue and announced the closure on the night of the election.

He has been lobbying the Legislature to allow a revote ever since.

The Kansas Star Casino was ultimately built just south of the Sedgwick County line, next to the Mulvane exit off the Kansas Turnpike in Sumner County.

Greyhound racing has a long history in Kansas. Abilene is a key center for breeding of racing hounds and is the site of the Greyhound Hall of Fame.

Lou Grant was a role Asner developed twice, first from 1970 to 1977 in “The Mary Tyler Moore Show,” a CBS network sitcom about a bumbling Minneapolis news team.

Asner went on to reprise the role from 1977 to 1982 in the CBS spinoff “Lou Grant,” a more serious journalism drama in which Asner played a hard-hitting editor at a Los Angeles newspaper.

Asner has won seven Emmy Awards and has 361 screen credits in television and film, according to a profile on the entertainment site IMDb.com.

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