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State official accused of abusive Facebook comments

by [Yvonne Wingett Sanchez](#) - Jul. 30, 2012 12:39 PM
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A greyhound-protection organization is calling for Gov. Jan Brewer to remove a state racing commissioner, saying he's made numerous offensive and suggestive statements about the group's president on his Facebook page.

[Letter to Gov. Brewer about Rory Goree](#)

Carey Theil, executive director of Massachusetts-based GREY2K USA wrote in a letter to the governor on Monday that Arizona Racing Commissioner Rory Goree has also said he wants to make it more difficult for people to obtain public records, and in one instance, remarked that he would demand an investigation into the organization if it made public a confidential tip about animal cruelty.

Brewer appointed Goree to the commission that oversees racing on March 16; the Senate confirmed his appointment in May. Commissioners serve for five years, state statute says. Nowhere in statute does it say the governor shall remove a commissioner who makes inappropriate comments.

Matthew Benson, the governor's spokesman, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Goree did not immediately return a message left with a woman at a phone number listed under his name. A U.S. Navy veteran, Goree worked with Greyhound Pets of America for 17

years and placed thousands of greyhounds in adoptive homes, according to a news release about his retirement from the non-profit last year. He is now a volunteer director of welfare and advocacy for United Greyhound Racing, according to his application to the racing commission. United Greyhound Racing supports greyhound racing and is at odds with GREY2K USA's mission to protect the animals.

In his letter to the governor, Theil wrote that Goree has repeatedly made "reprehensible" comments about Christine Dorchak, the president of the GREY2K USA board and general counsel. Theil included copies of Goree's Facebook posts with his letter.

In a June 30 Facebook post on a page called "Grey2k Lies," Goree referred to Dorchak's genitalia: "Anyone else notice something about the picture of Christine at Raynham -- first she gave us some toe in Tucson.....is she now showing something else at Raynham.....New fundraising tactic for old desperate men?"

Theil wrote that Goree has also made fun of a near-fatal accident Dorchak had in 1992, when she was struck by a rail car while walking her dog.

In one of those Facebook posts, he referred to Dorchak as "trash." In another, Goree wrote "for the dingleberries that like to stand out by the train track and take pictures -- well first you should talk to Christine about track safety."

Theil wrote that on July 15, Goree said on Facebook that he wanted to seek legislation to make citizen requests for government records more difficult. Goree wrote he was "mulling some bill ideas," and wrote that citizen groups that request public information should themselves "become subject to Freedom of Information Requests."

That same day, Goree stated on Facebook that groups should be required to publicly disclose all records requests they have made and disclose how much it costs governmental agencies to comply with requests. He also said the groups should have to disclose the information they receive unaltered.

"Setting aside the constitutional question of this proposal, it's unclear how citizen groups would comply with these mandates," Theil wrote. "More importantly, they would have a chilling effect on public information requests from non-profit groups working on a wide range of issues. This would in turn result in a significant decrease in government transparency."

On Jan. 5, 2011, Theil wrote, the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation opened a formal investigation after GREY2K USA gave them a confidential tip alleging animal cruelty, which was later found to be untrue. GREY2K USA put the investigative file in that case on the Internet on July 12, Theil said.

Days later, Goree made this statement about the Florida investigation: "Not sure who it was filed with, but I know one commissioner in AZ that would be demanding an investigation into GREY2K if they pulled this crap in his state."

Theil and Dorchak said Goree's statements don't reflect well on the Arizona Department

of Racing, the commission, or the state. From her home in Arlington, Mass., Dorchak told *The Arizona Republic* she believes Goree is abusing his position.

"Decent people can disagree about the issue of dog racing," said Dorchak, an animal protection attorney and president and founder of GREY2K USA. "What is being done here is not decent. These are words of sexual harassment -- crude remarks about my sexuality and my appearance -- and he's making them publicly. The racing commission is a regulatory body and it is supposed to be a neutral body."