



Farm Bill amendment could mean the end of greyhound racing in West Virginia

By Charles Young DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR | March 5, 2026

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Lawmakers on the U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Committee voted Wednesday to approve an amendment to the 2026 Farm Bill that would end commercial greyhound racing in the United States, including the two remaining tracks in West Virginia.

The full bill also passed the committee and is now headed to the House floor.

The amendment, sponsored by Rep. Salud Carbajal, D-Calif., would ban commercial greyhound racing, prohibit betting on foreign simulcast races, and stop the sale, transport, or export of greyhounds for racing purposes.

Carbajal emphasized the amendment is a measure to protect animals from what he called an outdated and inhumane practice.

“Greyhound racing is a relic of a bygone era in the United States, an outdated practice that no longer reflects our values or standards for animal welfare,” Carbajal said. “These poor dogs are often kept in stacked metal cages for up to 23 hours a day, and when released to race, they face a high risk of serious injuries such as paralysis, spinal injuries, broken limbs and even crushed skulls. These animals are treated not as the loyal, gentle companions they are, but as interchangeable racing units.”

West Virginia is currently the last state in the nation with live commercial greyhound racing. The industry operates at two racetrack-casinos: Wheeling Island Hotel-Casino-Racetrack and Mardi Gras Casino & Resort. State law requires both tracks to host live races to maintain their gambling licenses, even though most U.S. tracks have closed.

Carbajal noted the broader national trend against greyhound racing.

“Greyhound racing is widely viewed as cruel and unnecessary across the country. It already is illegal in 44 of the 50 states,” he said.

Although the only remaining domestic tracks are in West Virginia, American bettors are still financing greyhound racing in foreign countries with little to no animal protections through simulcast betting, Carbajal.

Greyhound advocates celebrated the adoption of the amendment.

“This is an historic victory for the protection of greyhounds, and the result of decades of grassroots campaigning,” said GREY2K USA Executive Director Carey Theil. “We are grateful for the leadership of these legislative champions who have given the dogs a voice.”

[A recent study by the Center for Business and Economic Research at Ball State University](#) found that greyhound racing provides only temporary employment gains and relies almost entirely on \$15 million to \$22 million in annual state subsidies, funneled from gaming revenue, to remain operational. Employment increases in counties hosting tracks were brief, peaking two to three years after races began and then returning to baseline.

The study concluded the industry “does not function as a viable long-run economic development strategy,” noting that state subsidies far exceed tax revenue generated by the sector.