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Greyhound betting in Colorado is still a multimillion-dollar business. That might be about to change.

A bipartisan bill being considered in the state legislature would outlaw simulcast greyhound betting

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Greyhounds compete in a race at the Iowa Greyhound Park, Saturday, April 16, 2022, in Dubuque, Iowa. After the end of a truncated season in Dubuque in May, the track here will close. By the end of the year, there will only be two tracks left in the country.

Colorado hasn't seen a live greyhound race in 15 years — but millions of dollars continue to pour in on dog races happening around the world. Now state lawmakers want to make greyhound betting a thing of the past.

A bipartisan group of lawmakers this month voted unanimously to advance a bill that would prohibit wagering on simulcast greyhound races. Currently, it's legal in Colorado to bet on

greyhound races at out-of-state race tracks that are simulcast for viewing in off-track betting venues. More than \$22.3 million was bet in the state on greyhound racing last year — the fifth-highest mark in the country.

“The end of greyhound racing in Colorado was a victory for everyone in the state who cares about dogs,” wrote Carey Theil, executive director of [GREY2K USA Worldwide](#), a nonprofit working to end greyhound racing, in a letter supporting the bill.

[HB23-1041](#) would close the loophole that has allowed Coloradans to continue to bet on a sport the state already outlawed. It seems disingenuous to ban racing here while still perpetuating the sport elsewhere through betting, said Rep. Mike Lynch, the top-ranking Republican in the House, and one of the bill’s sponsors.

“This good bill will end our participation in an industry that’s cruel and inhumane,” said Rep. Monica Duran, the House Majority leader, in [recent testimony](#) before the House Business Affairs & Labor committee.

Colorado hasn’t had a greyhound race since 2008, and in 2014 Gov. John Hickenlooper [signed a bill into law](#) banning the sport. Wagering on dogs, however, continued — despite the sport’s waning cultural relevance. Only Florida, Oregon, North Dakota and Texas accepted more wagers on greyhound racing last year than Colorado, according to GREY2K.

Of the \$22.3 million in bets here, \$18.3 million came from wagers on simulcast races, according to data from the state’s Division of Racing Events. Just under \$4 million came from “advance deposit wagering” — placing bets through the computer or phone. There are only two active tracks left in the United States — both in West Virginia. Forty-two states have banned dog racing, according to GREY2K. But the sport continues in the United Kingdom and Mexico.

The bill in Colorado comes as several other states have moved to outlaw greyhound gambling in recent years. [Massachusetts](#) and [Kansas](#) last year passed laws prohibiting greyhound simulcasting. And lawmakers in [Oregon](#) — which acts as a national hub for online wagering — pushed through legislation that would ban greyhound betting from states where wagering on dog racing is illegal.

“Colorado law should not allow an industry to profit from a practice that is all but extinct in the United States because of its cruelty.” Claire Levy, a former Colorado state representative and greyhound advocate, wrote in a letter to lawmakers. “Nor should Colorado residents be allowed to gamble on it. It is the same as banning dog fights and cock fights, yet allowing people to invest and keep the practice alive elsewhere.”

Bally’s Arapahoe Park, a horse-racing track in Arapahoe County that hosts simulcast betting, and other Colorado equine organizations originally objected to bill, saying money from greyhound betting contributes to horse racing purses. Advocates said they worried that the bill would impact the horse industry, even though it targets dog racing.

“We need every dollar we can,” Howie Chavers, with the Rocky Mountain Quarter Horse Association, told the legislative committee. “Taking this away will probably end our organization.”

But the park ultimately agreed to be neutral on the bill, Theil said, if sponsors moved the effective date of the prospective legislation to October 2024.

“The walls are closing in on this,” Lynch said during the committee meeting.