



## COMMENT

# Scotland on the cusp of landmark greyhound racing ban

10 HRS AGO ANIMAL CRUELTY GREYHOUND RACING ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND



Mark Ruskell's bill could transform the future of animal rights in Scotland (Image: Jeff J Mitchell)

By Christine Dorchak

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## **CONCERNS about the cruelty of dog racing are at the forefront of an epic shift in the way we think about animals in modern society.**

That's why governments, leaders and policy makers all over the world are feeling the pressure to rethink this cruel and outdated activity, which brings injury and death to greyhounds wherever it exists.

Tomorrow, the Scottish Parliament will hold a Stage 3 vote on **Scottish Greens** MSP Mark Ruskell's Greyhound Racing (Offences) (Scotland) Bill.

If approved, Scotland will make history by outlawing commercial greyhound racing, something supported by 60% of the country, according to a Panelbase survey commissioned by GREY2K, a non-profit advocacy organisation.

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It will not be radical or controversial if MSPs vote in favour of Ruskell's bill. Passing it is the right and timely response needed to curb greyhound gambling and stop all the suffering that comes with it.

As the Scottish Animal Welfare Commission found in 2023, there are inherent and unrelenting welfare concerns around dog racing that are too serious to ignore.

While some may believe that dog tracks will simply shut down on their own – even suggesting that legislation isn't necessary – this is not the case.

Commercial racing is a **business** that churns out puppies by the thousands and discards them like garbage once they fail to perform or become surplus to requirement. Dogs fortunate enough to survive training only face further risk down the line.

The Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) admits that 10 dogs are injured per day and that one racing greyhound dies on the track every three days.



Christine Dorchak is an animal rights campaigner (*Image: Supplied*)

So no industry PR campaign, including the latest GBGB spin about providing a “good life for every greyhound”, will save the unwanted puppies or rescue adult hounds from the deadly demand to win, much less overcome the challenges of finding homes for industry cast-offs.

A total of 3333 dogs were placed by the Retired Greyhound Trust or independent rescues in 2024 from a total of nearly 6000 that exited the industry. What happened to the rest?

Thornton Stadium in **Fife**, Scotland's last operating track until it closed indefinitely in March last year, was never required to disclose how many dogs were injured or died, so this number does not even reflect the full breadth of the problem. Thankfully, Scotland is on the cusp of a landmark victory, one which sets it ahead of the curve in legislating to save greyhounds.

In Wales, the Senedd will have its final Stage 4 vote on the Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill today while New Zealand is phasing out its tracks in the next few months.

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In the United States, the country which invented commercial racing, the bipartisan Greyhound Protection Act was approved by the House Agriculture Committee in just 14 minutes on March 4 – a harbinger for its success in the current Congress.

Scotland has a strong track record on dog welfare with two significant pieces of legislation passed just last year – the Welfare of Dogs (Scotland) Act 2025 and the Dog Theft (Scotland) Act 2025.

Will it score a hat-trick with a law to end greyhound racing as well?

On behalf of hundreds of thousands of greyhound advocates across the world, I urge MSPs to vote for the bill, and in so doing, vote for compassion, choose progress over outmoded tradition, and put Scotland at the forefront of a global movement to give greyhounds the second chance they deserve.

Christine Dorchak is president and general counsel of GREY2K USA Worldwide  
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