

## Iowans for Ending Dog Racing launches organization

Written by Sam Roecker

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Group Urges Iowans to Sign Petition at: [www.EndIowaDogRacing.com](http://www.EndIowaDogRacing.com)

DES MOINES, Iowa – Today, leaders from Dubuque and Council Bluffs gathered at the state capitol to roll out “Iowans for Ending Dog Racing” -- a new organization aimed at mobilizing support across the state to end dog racing in Iowa.

The leaders of “Iowans for Ending Dog Racing” include Dubuque Mayor Roy Buol, Greater Dubuque Development Corporation President & CEO Rick Dickinson, Council Bluffs Chamber President Bob Mundt and former Council Bluffs mayor Tom Hanafan.

The Iowa dog racing industry requires \$13 million in subsidies every year, which costs Council Bluffs and Dubuque millions in local economic development and charitable giving. “Eliminating the requirement that dog racing remain in Dubuque would be an enormous benefit to our community in terms of millions of additional dollars that could be spent on charitable giving and local economic development,” said Dubuque Mayor Roy Buol.

Ending dog racing in Iowa would also open up the land where the current track is located in Council Bluffs for new development. “The dog track in Council Bluffs sits directly off of I-80 on one of the top potential development sites in the entire state,” said former Council Bluffs mayor Tom Hanafan. “Since attendance and interest in dog racing has dramatically declined in the last two decades, our community would benefit greatly by opening up that area for new development and job opportunities.”

Iowans for Ending Dog Racing is encouraging citizens from Dubuque, Council Bluffs and across the entire state to study the facts about the dog racing industry and sign the petition to end dog racing in Iowa at [www.EndIowaDogRacing.com](http://www.EndIowaDogRacing.com).

The organization is also encouraging Iowans to contact their local legislator and urge him or her to support proposed legislation to end dog racing in Iowa. The proposed bipartisan bill that has passed a committee in the Iowa House would provide the dog racing industry with \$70 million over seven years to end dog racing and explore new opportunities. In addition, each

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casino currently subsidizing the dog racing industry has publicly committed to keeping their track employees on staff and giving them a new role within the casinos.

“Ending dog racing in Iowa is common sense and is strongly supported by local business, citizens and city officials in Dubuque and Council Bluffs,” said Mayor Buol. “The time has come to turn the page on dog racing and allow these communities to create new opportunities for the people of Iowa.”

Get the Facts on Dog Racing in Iowa:

- Dog racing is bad for Iowa. The more you learn about the industry, the more you will want it out of Iowa. Ready to take action? Sign the Petition to get dog racing out of Iowa.

- Dog Racing is Illegal in Most States. Iowa is one of only 7 states legally operating greyhound racing tracks. Commercial dog racing is illegal in 38 states.

- \$13 Million in Subsidies Keeping Dog Racing Alive in Iowa. The only thing keeping dog racing in business in Iowa is a state law requiring subsidies to dog racing that now total more than \$13 million annually.

- Betting on Dogs Started to Decline 3 Years After Opening in Iowa. Live dog racing started in Iowa in 1986. By 1989 betting on dog racing began to decline.

- Betting is Down 97% since 1986. Combined betting at the Mystique dog track in Dubuque and Bluffs Run Greyhound Park at Horseshoe Council Bluffs has dropped from \$186 million in 1986 to just \$5.9 million in 2012 – a 97 percent decline. [Des Moines Register, 1/21/14]

- 38% of Iowa purse money goes to out-of-state dog owners.

- Of the purse money remaining in Iowa, 95% is paid to just 25 Iowans.

- Council Bluffs Chamber and City Support Ending Dog Racing. The Council Bluffs Chamber of Commerce has joined the Council Bluffs City Council in adopting a resolution “strongly supporting” legislation calling for the elimination of live dog racing at the Harrah’s/Horseshoe Bluffs Run greyhound race park and in the state of Iowa. On January 14th the Council voted 4-0 to end dog racing.

- Dubuque Chamber, City and Racing Association Support Ending Dog Racing. The Dubuque Chamber of Commerce, the City of Dubuque and the Dubuque Racing Association all support ending dog racing in Dubuque and Council Bluffs.

- Ending Dog Racing in Council Bluffs Means More Retail, Economic Development & Jobs. Currently racing in Council Bluffs is conducted in a near empty facility that seats more than 2,500. Located just off I-80 near Bass Pro Shops, that property could be transformed into additional retail space, attracting more customers and revenue to the area and creating more jobs for Iowans.

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- Ending Dog Racing in Dubuque Means Millions to Local Non-Profits, Economic Development. The current law causes Dubuque's non-profit Mystique Casino to lose more than \$4 million each year to subsidize dog racing. With Mystique's profits split equally between the City of Dubuque and local charities, those millions would be better used to fund volunteer first responders, security in our schools, new capital improvement projects and industrial parks.

- Both Casinos Committed to Keeping Track Employees Employed in Casinos. Both casinos currently subsidizing dog racing have publicly committed to keeping their track employees on staff and giving them a new role within the casinos. In addition, quality jobs will be created by ending the subsidy requirement and directing millions of dollars towards local economic development.

- Proposed bipartisan legislation will end dog racing in Iowa and provide Iowa greyhound breeders and kennel owners \$70 million over the next seven years to wind down.

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