

Mr Finlay Carson MSP
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

4th April 2025

Dear Mr Carson,

Greyhound Racing in Scotland

I am contacting you from the Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) in your capacity as Convenor of the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee. I am again grateful for your time in 2023 for allowing us to present evidence to the Committee on the subject of regulated greyhound racing.

As you know, Mark Ruskell MSP is due to introduce his Member's Bill to ban greyhound racing later this month and I understand that the RAI Committee will likely be chosen to act as the Lead Committee in scrutinising the Bill.

As you are aware from our engagement with the RAI Committee to date, GBGB is clear that regulation is the only way to safeguard greyhound welfare. This very much echoes the views of the Scottish Government, following its 2023 consultation on licensing of animal activities, that greyhound racing in Scotland must have effective oversight and reliably high welfare standards.

There have however been several developments since our last engagement with the Committee which I wanted to draw to your attention and which I hope we can discuss further.

As you may know, in February, the Welsh Government announced a proposal to ban our sport in Wales and, in doing so, admitted that the decision was part of a backroom deal with the Senedd's sole Liberal Democrat MS, Jane Dodds, to get their Budget over the line. GBGB has been firm in its opposition to this and is exploring a Judicial Review.

We understand however that Mr Ruskell is using this undemocratic development in Wales, which has nothing to do with greyhound welfare, as evidence to support a ban of our sport in Scotland. Basing such important decisions on personal agendas rather than on evidence is entirely unacceptable. I hope that, through your Committee's careful consideration, Scotland will not find itself in a similar situation where the social licence of working with animals, or even owning pets, ends up in a very different place.

In addition, contrary to the myths and inaccuracies that are frequently pedalled by animal rights activists opposed to our sport – many of whom are not based in Scotland – I wanted to draw your attention to a recent poll conducted by [The Scottish Herald](#) which Mr Ruskell himself promoted. This found that 75% of the over 16,000 voters do not support a ban on greyhound racing. It is clear that this is not something Scottish voters and the Scottish public want.

Given these developments and the upcoming introduction of Mr Ruskell's Bill, I would be very keen to meet with you – whether online or in person – to discuss the future of our sport in Scotland and, importantly, to ensure that both you and your colleagues on the RAI Committee have the most accurate and up-to-date information you require.

Greyhound Board of Great Britain

1 Knightrider Court, London, EC4V 5BJ

Please do let me know if there is a time that would suit you best.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Bird
Chief Executive, Greyhound Board of Great Britain