

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



## **Leading animal protection groups criticize greyhound racing industry for lack of preparedness for major hurricane**

*Tracks and kennel operators have more than 5,000 dogs at eight kennels and deficient evacuation plans*

(Sept. 9, 2017) – The Humane Society of the United States has been doing preparedness work and animal transports and evacuations in Florida, and is preparing for search-and-rescue and additional transports after Hurricane Irma hits. But The HSUS and GREY2K USA today issued serious concerns about the failure of the greyhound racing industry – which is highly concentrated in Florida – to do proper preparedness, potentially putting thousands of dogs at risk in the state.

The HSUS and GREY2K USA yesterday received a report that there are 700 greyhounds at a single kennel in Miami-Dade County, and that the Florida Greyhound Association, whose members own the dogs, had no plans for evacuation, even if a Category 5 storm was heading straight for it.

There are more than a half dozen other kennels, including one in St. Petersburg with 900 dogs, that also appear to be sheltering in place.

“The greyhound racing industry puts dogs at risk on the track, but its level of negligence in not having sound emergency preparedness plans in a state prone to hurricanes should be a wake-up call to emergency management officials and other state officials,” said Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The Humane Society of the United States. “When you have this number of dogs at a single facility, you face the potential of enormous loss of life if a catastrophic storm makes a direct hit.”

“Every kennel with hundreds of dogs should have emergency plans, including a plan for evacuation and locations to bring dogs in advance of a huge storm,” added Carey Theil, president of GREY2K USA. “The greyhound industry should no longer be allowed to roll the dice with dogs and hope that a massive storm misses their kennel.”

Both organizations have criticized state policies that require tracks to race dogs, with subsidies for racing coming from casino-style gambling at the complexes.

“The only reason greyhound racing survives in Florida is that the state requires it, and allows gambling revenues to be diverted to support racing at tracks with a handful of spectators occupying the bleachers,” added Theil. “The state should de-couple gambling and racing and allow gambling complex that want to end racing to do so.”

- Daytona Beach Kennel Club (750 dogs) - Daytona Beach
- Derby Lane (900 dogs) - St. Petersburg
- Ebro Greyhound Track (500 dogs) - Ebro
- Florida Greyhound Kennel (700 dogs) - Hialeah
- Orange Park (750 dogs) - Jacksonville
- Sanford Orlando Kennel Club (700 dogs) - Longwood
- Palm Beach Kennel Club (1,000 dogs) - West Palm Beach
- Pensacola Greyhound Track (400 dogs) – Pensacola

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***GREY2K USA Worldwide** is the largest greyhound protection organization in the world. As a non-profit entity, we work to pass stronger greyhound protection laws and to end the cruelty of dog racing on both national and international levels. We also promote the rescue and adoption of greyhounds across the globe.*

***The Humane Society of the United States** is the most effective animal protection organization, as rated by our peers. For more than 60 years, we have celebrated the protection of all animals and confronted all forms of cruelty. We and our affiliates are the nation’s largest provider of hands-on services for animals, caring for more than 150,000 animals each year, and we prevent cruelty to millions more through our advocacy campaigns. Read about our more than 60 years of transformational change for animals and people. [HumaneSociety.org](http://HumaneSociety.org)*