



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee

Mairi Gougeon
Cabinet Secretary for
Rural Affairs and Islands

c/o Clerk to the Committee
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

rural.committee@parliament.scot

By email only

29 April 2022

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

PETITION PE1758: END GREYHOUND RACING IN SCOTLAND

At its meeting on 20 April 2022, the Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee considered the public petition [PE1758: End greyhound racing in Scotland](#) submitted by Scotland Against Greyhound Exploitation (SAGE). The petition calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to put an end to greyhound racing in Scotland.

The Official Report for the Committee's consideration of the petition can be viewed here: [Meeting of the Parliament: RAINE/20/04/2022 | Scottish Parliament Website](#)

The Committee agreed to write to you in relation to the petition and, specifically, on the effectiveness of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 in protecting the welfare of greyhounds at the two racing tracks in Scotland (Shawfield Stadium and Thornton Greyhound Stadium).

In response to a supplementary question from Mark Ruskell MSP at portfolio questions on 3 March 2022, you stated that—

“the provisions of the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006, as amended, are sufficient to ensure that action can be taken if the welfare requirements for greyhounds, whether they are still racing or retired, are not being met. The provisions in part 2 of the 2006 act apply to all people who are responsible for animals, including breeders, trainers and owners of racing greyhounds.”

In support of its position, however, SAGE gave evidence to the Committee of the reported abuse, neglect, injury and doping of greyhounds being raced in Scotland.

SAGE further stated that there have been no prosecutions pursued in relation to these reports and expressed particular concern at the lack of oversight at unregulated tracks in Scotland.

I would be grateful if you could provide further information about how the 2006 Act can ensure that action can be taken to protect the welfare of greyhounds, especially at unregulated tracks where a vet is not present and regular welfare checks are not required.

The Committee would welcome a response by Friday 3 June in order to enable us to reconsider this petition before summer recess.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Finlay Carson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Finlay Carson MSP

Convener

Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee