

TO: Members of the Western Australian Parliament
FROM: Coalition for the Protection of Greyhounds Committee
DATE: 17 July 2019
RE: Greyhound muzzling in Western Australia



SUBMISSION TO THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT ON THE LAWS
REQUIRING COMPANION GREYHOUNDS TO BE MUZZLED

Dear Members,

We would like to convey our support for the complete repeal of s 33(1) of the Dog Act 1976 (WA). It is our belief that the enforced muzzling of companion greyhounds should be stopped.

We submit the following reasons in support of our belief;

Firstly, the reality is that greyhounds are not aggressive by nature. In contrast, they are one of the gentler breeds of dogs adopted as companion animals. Their patient and gentle nature is increasingly being recognised as evidenced by the rapid increase in the number of greyhounds being adopted as assistant and/ or therapy dogs.

Secondly, we believe that the continued muzzling of greyhounds perpetuates the public conception of greyhounds as an aggressive breed. This is understandable, if a person sees a certain breed of dog muzzled every time they see that breed of dog, it is natural to assume that breed is aggressive and dangerous. Adoption numbers and the number of greyhounds who are able to live a happy life post-rescue are affected by this conception.

Thirdly, Western Australia stands as one of only three Australia states that requires greyhounds to be muzzled in public. Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, the ACT, and the NT have all repealed muzzling legislation.

Fourthly, in the states where muzzling legislation has been repealed, the RSPCA has recorded no increase in the number of attacks by greyhounds. There is also no evidence elsewhere which supports the idea that areas without greyhound muzzling legislation see an increase in attacks or bites.

Finally, we submit that a blanket ban on unmuzzled greyhounds is unfair. All greyhounds are different. It should be the decision of each greyhound owner as to whether they believe their dog has a temperament which requires muzzling in public. The current situation requires even the most calm and loving greyhounds to wear a muzzle or go through a behavioural assessment. It is our belief that in the vast majority of situations, the current leashing requirements are sufficient for a greyhound to be kept under the control of its owner. This belief is supported by the recommendations of a 2016 Victorian inquiry into Breed Specific Legislation.

Thank you for your consideration,

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