

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2025

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1952

By: Representative Hawk
By: Senator J. Dismang

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO ASSIST THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE
ATHLETIC COMMISSION; TO PROVIDE FUNDING TO THE STATE
ATHLETIC COMMISSION TO CONTINUE ITS MISSION TO
PROMOTE A ROBUST, HEALTHY, AND SAFE COMBATIVE SPORTS
INDUSTRY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO ASSIST THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE
STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION; TO PROVIDE
FUNDING TO THE STATE ATHLETIC COMMISSION
TO CONTINUE ITS MISSION TO PROMOTE A
ROBUST, HEALTHY, AND SAFE COMBATIVE
SPORTS INDUSTRY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 17-22-101(3), concerning definitions
pertaining to combative sporting events, is amended to read as follows:

(3)(A) “Combative sports” means boxing, kick boxing, wrestling,
professional wrestling, martial arts, Muay Thai, or any combination thereof,
or any form of hand-to-hand, elbow-and-foot, or foot-and-leg competition in
which:

(i) A blow is struck which may reasonably be expected
to inflict injury; or

(ii) A surface for fighting is used that may reasonably
be expected to inflict injury.

(B) “Combative sports” does not include student training or



1 an exhibition of a student's skill when:

2 (i) Conducted by a martial arts school or an
3 association of martial arts schools;

4 (ii) The student's participation is for health and
5 recreational purposes rather than competition;

6 (iii) The intent is to use only partial contact; and

7 (iv) The scoring technique is based only on points;

8 ~~(C) "Combative sports" does not include professional~~
9 ~~wrestling;~~

10
11 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 17-22-204(a), concerning the authority of
12 the State Athletic Commission, is amended to read as follows:

13 (a)(1)(A) The State Athletic Commission shall have the sole
14 discretion, management, control, and jurisdiction over all combative sports
15 matches and exhibitions in this state.

16 (B)~~(i)~~ The commission shall adopt uniform policies, fees,
17 and forms to ensure fair regulation of the combative sports industry.

18 ~~(ii) The commission shall have no authority over~~
19 ~~professional wrestling events.~~

20 (2) A combative sports match or exhibition declared to be amateur
21 and self-regulated shall be governed by the commission unless sanctioned by:

22 (A) A federally recognized sanctioning body approved in
23 writing by the commission; and

24 (B) A national oversight body with 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3)
25 status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 operating in at least six (6)
26 states approved in writing by the commission.

27 (3) A professional wrestling event with one thousand five
28 hundred (1,500) or more attendees shall be governed by the commission.

29
30 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 17-22-302(f), concerning the training and
31 certification of referees and judges for professional combative sports
32 events, is amended to read as follows:

33 (f)(1) A referee or judge for professional events shall attend
34 training courses given by and obtain certification from the Association of
35 Boxing Commissions or other sanctioned organization approved by the State
36 Athletic Commission for the referee or judge's discipline.

1 (2) A referee or judge may take the courses provided by the
2 Association of Boxing Commissions or other sanctioned organization approved
3 by the State Athletic Commission anywhere in the United States if
4 documentation of training and certification is provided upon application for
5 a license.

6
7 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 17-22-306(a), concerning fees for combative
8 sports events, is amended to read as follows:

9 (a)(1) Within five (5) business days after a combative sports match or
10 exhibition, the licensed manager, promoter, or person responsible for the
11 match or exhibition shall furnish to the State Athletic Commission a written
12 report under the penalty of perjury on a form that shall be provided by the
13 commission showing the number of tickets or subscriptions for physical
14 admission that were issued or sold and the gross receipts therefor without
15 any deductions whatsoever.

16 (2)(A) The person shall also pay to the commission at the same
17 time a five-percent fee of the total gross receipts received from admission
18 charges for each match or exhibition held under the authority of this
19 chapter.

20 (B) The five percent (5%) shall be computed using gross gate
21 receipts, unless the venue collects and remits sales tax for the promoter.

22 (C) If the venue collects and remits sales tax for the
23 promoter, the five percent (5%) shall be computed on the net gate receipts
24 after sales tax.

25 (D)(i) If a promoter allows admission to a match or
26 exhibition in return for a payment other than the cash purchase of tickets,
27 the commission shall:

28 (a) Determine the method to be used to calculate
29 the five-percent value of the gate receipts; or

30 (b) Set a reasonable price per person to be paid
31 by the promoter to the commission.

32 (ii) If the promoter requests a decision from the
33 commission regarding the payment under this section before the match or
34 exhibition, the commission shall make the determination and notify the
35 promoter of the determination before the match or exhibition.

36 (3)(A) The promoter shall pay:

1 (i) Pay all costs of the cost of an event inspector
2 ~~or investigator present at the event; and~~

3 (ii) Reimburse all costs of the commission for the
4 event, including without limitation:

5 (a) The cost of each event inspector or
6 investigator not to exceed one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125) per day for
7 each inspector or investigator;

8 (b) Per diem, expenses, and travel
9 reimbursements authorized under § 17-22-204 and § 25-16-901 et seq.;

10 (c) The event permit processing fee of fifty
11 dollars (\$50.00) authorized under § 17-22-302; and

12 (d) The national and federal fighter database
13 fees charged to the commission under § 17-22-206.

14 (B) ~~The Except as provided under subdivision (a)(3)(D) of~~
15 ~~this section, the~~ cost of the event inspector or investigator shall not
16 exceed one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125) per day for each inspector or
17 investigator.

18 (C) The commission shall:

19 (i) Determine if there is a need to appoint an
20 inspector or investigator at an event;

21 (ii) Determine the number of inspectors or
22 investigators to be appointed for the event; and

23 (iii) Notify the promoter in writing before the event
24 of:

25 (a) The number of inspectors or investigators to
26 be appointed;

27 (b) The cost of the inspectors or investigators;
28 and

29 (c) The reasons for the appointment.

30 (D) [Repealed.]