

Ohio Athletic Commission
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Bernie Profato
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State of Ohio
OHIO ATHLETIC COMMISSION

Chairman Faber and members of the Finance Subcommittee, my name is Bernie Profato, I am the Executive Director for the Ohio Athletic Commission and have held this position since September 2004. I apologize for not being present due to recent knee replacement surgery and having this letter being read into record on behalf of the Ohio Athletic Commission, Chairman Mr. Robert Schuerger and commission members: Mr. John Patton, Mr. Jon Stainbrook, Dr. James Armile and Mr. Raymond Mancino. I would like to thank the members of the Ohio Athletic Commission and especially Senator Tom Patton, a non-voting member of the commission, for their dedicated efforts in regulating the safety and well-being for those contestants competing in unarmed combat sports in the state of Ohio. I wish to also acknowledge the tremendous support received from Governor Kasich's staff, the legislators, the Office of Budget and Management, the Department of Administrative Services and other state agencies such as Legislative Services Commission and Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review.

Mission/Purpose

The Ohio Athletic Commission is responsible to oversee the regulation of unarmed combat sports in the State of Ohio. These sports include professional boxing, mixed martial arts, karate, kickboxing, tough person contests, other new developing forms of martial arts and to a limited degree professional wrestling.

The primary mission of the commission is to ensure that whenever athletes compete in Ohio, their safety and well-being is the number one priority, so as to minimize any risk of serious injury or death. All unarmed combat sports are regulated to ensure that all rules and regulations are followed. All officials are trained and constantly updated on any new changes. These officials include all inspectors, referees and judges and to some extent all of the ringside physicians. Updated information received from the American Ringside Physicians Association, is passed onto the physicians assigned by the commission to work these events.

All new officials must go through a trial period prior to them being issued a license. The commission licenses all contestants, all non-officials, which includes managers, trainers, and seconds. We also ensure that there is proper licensed medical staff in attendance at all sanctioned events including ambulatory services. Also an established policy of the commission insures that all contestants be examined by the attending ringside physician prior to and after they compete.

Challenges

- The unarmed combat sports regulated by the Athletic Commission are continually evolving into different event formats and the commission is challenged to keep current with these formats to ensure that there is adequate regulation for these sports. Have to be able to identify and interpret the various techniques used in these sports.
- With the increasing number of events, the challenge of not only licensing all participants, but getting their license recorded in a database, creating the actual license and getting the license mailed to the licensee within a limited time span. All licenses including National ID's for mixed martial arts contestants and Federal ID's for all professional boxing contestants are usually sent out within five to seven days.
- The commission assigns all officials to these events, these include inspectors, physicians, referees, judges and timekeepers. This requires a phone call confirmation for each official assigned to work for each event. A finalized list of officials' names and assignments is posted on the OAC website permitting officials to check for the time and location of their assignments.
- Reviewing every scheduled bout for all boxing and mixed martial arts events to determine if the contestants are evenly and fairly matched, according to skill level, experience and weight class so as to produce a fair and sportsmanlike contest.

Accomplishments

- Improved safety of fighters by working with the Cleveland Clinic to provide no cost MRI's.
- Hosted several world title fights which brought additional revenue for the state and local economy
- Remains one of the leading commissions in the country for the directions taken to improve the quality of unarmed combat sports.

Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budget

Approval of the requested 2018-2019 budget will allow the Ohio Athletic Commission to continue to oversee the operations of unarmed combat sports in the State of Ohio.

Thank you

Bernie Profato
Executive Director