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STATE OF OHIO  
OHIO ATHLETIC COMMISSION

TESTIMONY BEFORE  
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

THE HONORABLE, CHAIR  
RODNEY CREECH  
FEBRUARY 12, 2025

STATEHOUSE  
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215

EXECUTIVE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS  
FISCAL YEARS 2026-2027

## **INTRODUCTION**

Good morning, chairman Creech, vice chairman Newman and the other respected members of the Committee. My name is Chuck Haskell, Executive Director of the Ohio Athletic Commission. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to present testimony and answer any questions you may have regarding the Executive Budget recommendations.

## **THE OHIO ATHLETIC COMMISSION**

The mission of the Ohio Athletic Commission is to maintain high standards for promoters, contestants, officials, and non-officials for all combative sporting events regulated by the commission. In addition to regulating events, the OAC regulates the licensing of Athlete Agents to protect the rights and interests of all college and high school athletes while they are in negotiations with professional sports agents.

The commission consistently works to improve the quality of rules and administrative codes that enforce the safety of the contestants, educate the officials and non-officials by providing seminars, training, overseeing the licensing of all participants, and providing regulation of all events to make sure that safety requirements are adequately met by the commission. The Ohio Athletic Commission consists of five voting members appointed by the Governor and two non-voting commissioners, one Executive Director, and two employees. The commission is dedicated to protecting the integrity of all events and the safety and well being of contestants who participate in boxing, mixed martial arts, kickboxing, professional wrestling and any other regulated unarmed combat sports. The Ohio Athletic Commission pledges to work alongside other state athletic commissions to ensure the safety of all involved.

## **2026-2027 PROPOSED BUDGET INCREASE**

The OAC Board is a non-GRF funded agency. The proposed budget increase for FY 2026-2027 is to help provide our office with additional IT support, more training for our officials and non-official workers and updated office equipment. The OAC plans to increase our revenue with more local regional, national, and world class events in Ohio. With more events on all levels there will be more contestants, officials, promoters and fans. The OAC also has explored taxing Pro wrestling events and Pay-per view events like other states do. There have been discussions on raising the tax from 5% to 6% to help off-set additional expenses of regulating events in Ohio. To ensure efficient office work, the OAC is using CSA, OBM and other government services to help employees to be more productive. As a result of the commission's diligent work, we are confident that more events will come to Ohio. More events create more interest and participation. In return, there will be an increase in both service fees and tax revenue.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Ohio Athletic Commission would like to take this opportunity to share information about both our mission and vision to maintain Ohio as one of the most respected Athletic Commissions in the Nation and always improve the standards set to ensure safety to all involved.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Haskell

Executive Director

Ohio Athletic Commission

