



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKA'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAME KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: dbedt.hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Friday, March 1, 2024
9:55 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SB 2170, SD1
RELATING TO COMBAT SPORTS.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports the intent of SB 2170, SD1, which establishes a new regulatory framework for combat sports contests in Hawai'i by renaming the existing Boxing Commission of Hawai'i as the Combat Sports Commission of Hawai'i.

DBEDT is in agreement that the Commission's jurisdiction should be expanded to include all combat sports, which incorporates techniques from boxing, wrestling, judo, jujitsu, karate, Muay Thai, etc., allowing oversight to not only boxing but others as described in the measure. The State of Hawai'i has produced many champions in various disciplines of combat sports including Angela Lee and Max Holloway, just to name two very popular champions. This measure will allow for the continued growth of the combat sports industry and to attract events to the State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to support this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
KA 'OIHANA PILI KĀLEPA
335 MERCHANT STREET, ROOM 310
P.O. BOX 541
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809
Phone Number: (808) 586-2850
Fax Number: (808) 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

DEAN I HAZAMA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
And

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Friday, March 1, 2024

10:31 a.m.

Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

On the following measure:

S.B. 3344, S.D.1, RELATING TO WILDFIRES.

Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Nadine Ando and I am the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department") The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to establish the Hawaii wildfire relief fund and corporation to provide compensation for property damage claims resulting from future catastrophic wildfires. The devastating effects of the Maui wildfires have highlighted the urgent need to address the increased risks associated with climate change in our region. We appreciate the gravity of the situation and the importance of finding sustainable solutions to safeguard lives, homes and businesses in the future.

Although the Department acknowledges the importance of planning for and mitigating the impacts of catastrophic wildfires and are open to the concept of establishing a relief fund that would be housed within the Department, we would like to

express our reservations and concerns regarding the current proposal set forth in S.B. 3344, S.D.1.

The proposed Hawai'i wildfire relief fund and corporation as outlined in the bill will be charged with administering fund contributions that may come from the State, electric utilities, public utilities that contribute to the risk or severity of a catastrophic wildfire, other government entities, and private landowners who own at least 1,000 acres in Hawai'i. The purpose of the wildfire relief fund is to process eligible claims for property damage resulting from future catastrophic wildfires. Notably, however, the current proposal does not address the means or the mechanisms to compensate for claims of property damage arising out of the recent devastating Maui wildfires. The Department believes that a more comprehensive proposal from key stakeholders such as the electric utility, is needed to better assess the feasibility and effectiveness of any proposed measure relating to property damage compensation and risk exposure.

The Department remains committed to contributing constructively to the development of legislation that ensures the safety and well-being of our communities and is grateful for the opportunity to offer comments on this bill.



Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor

Deanna S. Sako
Managing Director

Robert H. Command
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i
Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokalole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

February 28, 2024

Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Hawai'i State Legislature
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Subject: S.B. 2170 SD1 RELATING TO COMBAT SPORTS
Hearing Date: Friday, March 1, 2024, at 9:55 a.m
Time/Place of Hearing: Via Videoconference, Conference Room 211

Aloha Honorable Chair Dela Cruz and Honorable Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means,

On behalf of the County of Hawai'i, I express my support for S.B. 2170 SD1. This measure will establish the Combat Sports Commission of Hawai'i, and provide for regulation of combat sports. The measure seeks to prohibit no rules combat or similar contests and establishes a Combat Sports Commission Special Fund.

The establishment of this Commission as a regulatory body will serve to ensure the safety and well-being of participating athletes, enforce safety measures, and provide a structured platform to organize and regulate competitions, ensuring fair play, integrity, and adherence to established rules, protocols, and standards. Implementing a Combat Sports Commission assures that events involve adequately trained and licensed personnel, contributing to the overall legitimacy of the sports system here in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of S.B. 2170 SD1. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor / County of Hawai'i

SB-2170-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2024 3:34:26 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/1/2024 9:55:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yancy Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Members of the Hawaii Legislature,

I would like to express my strong support for the establishment of a dedicated combat sports commission in the state of Hawaii.

As a current professional material artist, I firmly believe that the creation of a commission is crucial to the well-being of athletes, the integrity of the sports, and the overall growth of the industry in our state.

Combat sports, mixed martial arts (MMA), and kickboxing, have become increasingly popular in Hawaii. The culture of Hawaii combat sports has given me the opportunity to experience more outside of our islands and at the same time perpetuate and educate our Aloha. I believe we can create a community of dedicated athletes, trainers, and enthusiasts who contribute to our competitive culture.

By establishing a combat sports commission, Hawaii can take a proactive approach to safeguarding the health, and safety of athletes. The commission would have the authority to enforce standardized medical protocols, weight-cutting regulations, and concussion management guidelines, thereby reducing the risk of injuries and promoting athlete welfare. Furthermore, the commission could implement funding licensing requirements for promoters, trainers, and officials, ensuring that all stakeholders adhere to the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct.

In addition to protecting athletes, a dedicated combat sports commission would play a pivotal role in fostering a fair and transparent competitive environment. Through its regulatory powers, the commission could oversee matchmaking, drug testing, and rules enforcement, thereby upholding the integrity of the sports and preserving the trust of both participants and spectators. By establishing a level playing field and preventing unfair practices, the commission would elevate the overall quality of combat sports events in Hawaii, attracting top-tier talent and enhancing the state's reputation as a premier destination for such competitions.

Moreover, the creation of a combat sports commission is to establish an economic impact of these events in Hawaii. With proper regulation and oversight, the state can attract larger, high-profile events, leading to increased tourism, job creation, and business opportunities for local establishments.

By establishing a combat sports commission for Hawaii, we have the opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to the well-being of our athletes, the integrity of our sports, and the economic prosperity of our state. I urge the esteemed members of this legislature to lend their support to this important initiative, ensuring that Hawaii remains at the forefront of responsible, vibrant, and thriving combat sports culture.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Aloha all ways always,

Yancy Medeiros

SB-2170-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/29/2024 9:11:39 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/1/2024 9:55:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Walter Carvalho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Statement for the Hearing on Bill SB-2170

Senator Dela Cruz and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I stand before you today in full support of the intent behind Bill SB-2170 as is with no amendments, which aims to establish a dedicated combat sports commission for Hawaii. It is imperative that we acknowledge the unique nature of combat sports and recognize the need for a distinct commission that addresses the specific needs and challenges of these disciplines.

The proposition to merge the MMA commission with the boxing commission overlooks the fundamental differences between these sports. Just as jiu-jitsu differs from wrestling, MMA is not synonymous with boxing. Each sport requires specialized regulation and oversight to ensure the safety and well-being of its athletes.

Hawaii desperately requires a dedicated combat sports commission for several reasons:

1. Ensuring the safety of our athletes is paramount.

2. Regulation, monitoring, and tracking of fighters' records, wins, losses, and injuries are essential.

3. Strict adherence to protocols at every event is crucial.

4. The commission must generate its own funding transparently.

5. Recognition on a global scale as a legitimate state in the realm of combat sports is imperative.

6. Training and certification of all licensed personnel involved in events, including referees, judges, inspectors, timekeepers, and cutmen, is necessary.

7. Regulation of fees for local events to rebuild the combat sports ecosystem in Hawaii is vital.

8. Embracing the reality of combat sports will position Hawaii as a formidable force, attracting major events such as UFC, ONE FC, and many more huge events to our islands.

By establishing a dedicated combat sports commission, we pave the way for a safer, more regulated, and internationally respected combat sports scene in Hawaii. Let us seize this opportunity to elevate our state's profile in the world of combat sports.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Coach Wally (Walt Carvalho)

SB-2170-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/29/2024 9:39:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 3/1/2024 9:55:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jon	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Support for Bill SB-2170 – Establishing a Dedicated Combat Sports Commission for Hawaii

Dear Senator Dela Cruz and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I wholeheartedly endorse Bill SB-2170 in its current form, without amendments, aiming to establish a dedicated combat sports commission for Hawaii. This initiative is crucial, recognizing the unique nature of combat sports and addressing the specific needs and challenges posed from the DCCA's involvement.

The proposal to merge the MMA commission with the boxing commission overlooks the fundamental differences between these sports. Just as jiu-jitsu differs from wrestling, MMA is and has always been distinct from boxing, requiring specialized regulation for each. Our workload is already substantial, and adding an anchor to our efforts is unwarranted. The last legitimate Boxing show in Hawaii was in 2011. Since then, Boxing has dwindled, and we don't want to take on the additional burden while we kickstart this new program. Once we have revitalized the MMA scene we will be more than willing to provide a Boxing program with direction thereafter. Please, consider the originally written bill, without amendments. Hawaii urgently needs a dedicated combat sports commission for reasons including athlete safety, regulation, adherence to protocols, transparent funding generation, global recognition, fee regulation for local events, and attracting major events.

At present, the funds acquired by the DCCA Hawaii from local events are not aiding the combat scene. Instead, they are adversely impacting the combat community through unreasonable regulatory fees and sanctions. Our proposed solution directs attention and efforts towards enhancing the combat community, utilizing the support of an existing pool of sports enthusiast volunteers and the recirculation of resources within the community. The USA BOXING is a great example of this. Offering resources to teams and individuals to support their development.

Establishing this commission will ensure a safer, more regulated, and internationally respected combat sports scene in Hawaii, elevating our state's profile in this realm.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

ERP Developer,
Jon Barnard

LATE

SB-2170-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/29/2024 8:38:39 PM

Testimony for WAM on 3/1/2024 9:55:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Padilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is David Padilla and I am in full support of the intent behind Bill SB-2170. Although, I am not in support of the amendments. MMA and Boxing are two very different sports. Each sport requires specialized regulation and oversight to ensure they have safety measures in place for the well-being of its athletes. The oversight needs to be done by those with in-depth knowledge of the respective sport. "If" there were to be one commission, it would need to have two different branches. Each branch having its own head and financial account. Like I said, this would only be "if" the one commission was unavoidable. A respectable MMA commission could bring MMA back to Hawaii as it was in the past, a power house. Mahalo for your time.