

LATE

Testimony of the State Boxing Commission of Hawaii

**Before the
Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
and
Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Tuesday, February 3, 2026
9:35 a.m.
Conference Room 229 & Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:
S.B. 2045, RELATING TO COMBAT SPORTS**

Chair Keohokalole, Chair DeCoite, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Justin Jo, and I am the Executive Officer of the State Boxing Commission of Hawaii (Commission). The Commission supports and offers comments on this bill.

This bill renames the State Boxing Commission of Hawai'i as the Boxing and Combat Sports Commission of Hawaii, amends the jurisdiction of the Commission to include combat sports contests, prohibits no rules combat or similar combat sports contests, and repeals the existing Mixed Martial Arts Contests Program.

While the Commission supports the overall intent of the bill and its focus on strengthening oversight and accountability, we respectfully suggest the following amendments and considerations.

HRS440-A: page 3, line 16. The Commission respectfully recommends maintaining the 18-year minimum age requirement for professional-level contestants while permitting a broader age range for amateur competitors under 18 years of age, in order to provide for the development of combat sports at the amateur level. The Commission respectfully notes that currently, amateur boxing competitions frequently include contestants under the age of 18.

HRS440-E: page 9, line 13. The Commission respectfully expresses concerns regarding the establishment of a combat sports registry. The Commission notes that maintaining an active registry of all contestants represents a significant administrative undertaking that will require substantial resources and infrastructure. The Commission respectfully requests that dedicated funding be allocated to enable the Department of

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Commerce and Consumer Affairs to properly establish and maintain such a registry with appropriate parameters, technical specifications, and staffing in place to ensure its effective operation and compliance with regulatory requirements.

HRS440-F: page 9, line 18. The Commission respectfully requests clarification regarding the scope of its exclusive jurisdiction, direction, management, and control over combat sports as defined in S.B. 2045, to ensure proper implementation of the regulatory framework and to avoid jurisdictional ambiguity. Specifically, the Commission seeks to understand whether its authority extends to disciplines such as wrestling, judo, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, and other combat sports that have not historically been subject to Commission oversight in the State of Hawaii.

HRS440-I: page 17, line 7. The Commission notes that most amateur boxing competitions in the United States do not require an on-site ambulance. Industry members in combat sports have indicated to the Commission that the cost of retaining an ambulance is prohibitively expensive for amateur-level combat sports events to realistically be held.

HRS440-2: page 39, line 11. The Commission respectfully requests that the eight-member commission be amended to consist of seven commission members. A seven-member structure promotes operational efficiency, reduces the risk of quorum and tie-vote issues, and aligns with best practices commonly used by similarly situated boards and commissions. This approach would help ensure timely decision-making while still preserving diverse perspectives and effective representation.

HRS440-32: page 41, line 17. The Commission respectfully requests that the specified dollar amount limitation for medals or trophies be removed from the language. The Commission notes that current industry standard practice for amateur-level awards utilizes medals, trophies, and belts constructed from gold-plated plastic or synthetic leather materials, with average costs in today's market ranging from \$50 to \$150. Additionally, the Commission observes that establishing a fixed price cap of \$35 would be impractical given ongoing inflationary pressures and fluctuations in material and production costs over time. The Commission recommends either eliminating the

monetary threshold or establishing a mechanism for periodic adjustment to reflect market conditions.

In addition, the Commission respectfully suggests an amendment to this bill to include a targeted appropriation to support implementation of the Act. The Commission believes the scope and complexity of the new licensure categories, regulatory oversight, and administrative responsibilities created by this measure will require dedicated resources to ensure timely, consistent, and effective implementation.

Accordingly, the Commission recommends that SB 2045 be amended to read:

“SECTION 15. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$148,406 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for the establishment of one full-time equivalent (1 FTE) positions within the department of commerce and consumer affairs for the boxing and combat sports commission of Hawaii. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of commerce and consumer affairs for the purposes of this Act.”

Finally, the State Boxing Commission of Hawaii respectfully requests an implementation period of twelve to eighteen months following enactment. This timeframe would allow the Commission to work in coordination with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to develop necessary applications, establish appropriate procedures, and complete required system and operational updates.

The requested implementation period would also provide adequate time for the Governor’s Office to appoint and assign new commission members, as well as for the Commission to draft and adopt the Hawai‘i Administrative Rules required under this bill, while ensuring continuity of licensing and combat sport events without disruption.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
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: 1-844-808-DCCA (3222)
Fax Number: (808) 586-2856
cca.hawaii.gov

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

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House Committee on Consumer Protection and Commerce
And
House Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Tuesday, February 3, 2026
9:35 a.m.

Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

On the following measure:
S.B. 2045, RELATING TO COMBAT SPORTS

Chair Keohokalole, Chair DeCoite, and members of the Committees:

My name is Nadine Ando, and I am the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. The Department supports the intent of this bill, which establishes a Combat Sports Commission (Commission), and offers comments.

The purposes of this bill are to: (1) rename the Boxing Commission of Hawaii as the Combat Sports Commission of Hawaii; (2) amend the jurisdiction of the Commission to include combat sports contests; (3) prohibit no rules combat or similar combat sports contests; and (4) repeal the existing Mixed Martial Arts Contests Program.

The Department appreciates the consideration of combining the regulation of mixed martial arts and boxing under a single commission titled the Combat Sports Commission of Hawaii. This expansion would ease administration costs on licensees

and provide flexibility to the Commission to address all combat sports. However, the bill, as currently written does not address many issues related to combat sports which are essential to the regulation of mixed martial arts and are currently included in Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) chapter 440E, Mixed Martial Arts Contests.

The Department requests the following amendment on page 39, lines 8 to 15, the Department recommends that: (a) the composition of any board or commission be an odd numbered of members; and (b) that at least one (1) member on the Commission be a public member.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.