



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA
SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

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

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

Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Before the
House Committee on Finance
Thursday, April 2, 2026
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

On the following measure:
S.B. 148, S.D. 2, H.D. 2, RELATING TO COMBAT SPORTS

Chair Todd and Members of the Committee:

My name is Justin Jo, and I am the Executive Officer for the Mixed Martial Arts Program under the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. The Department supports the intent of this bill, which establishes a Boxing and Combat Sports Commission.

The purpose of this bill is 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 chapter 440E, HRS, relating to Mixed Martial Arts Contests.

The Department notes that the Hawaii Boxing Commission (Commission) has previously reviewed and provided testimony on S.B. 2045 (2026), a more recent measure addressing similar subject matters. The Department supports the

Commission's prior testimony on S.B. 2045, which reflected updated language and considerations developed through stakeholder input and Commission review. The Department offers the following comments for consideration.

First, regarding page 9, line 17, the Department respectfully expresses concerns with the establishment of a combat sports registry and request that this be removed from the bill. Maintaining an active registry of all contestants would represent a significant administrative undertaking requiring substantial resources and infrastructure.

Second, page 11, line 5, The Department recommends amending "no less than six months" to "no more than six months". The intent of this section is to ensure that contestants submit their most recent medical reports; however, as currently drafted, it could require submission of medical examinations that are older than six months from the contest date.

Third, page 39, lines 12 to 19, the Department recommends amending the eight-member commission to a seven-member commission. 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.

Fourth, page 42, line 1, the Department recommends removing the specified dollar limitation for medals or trophies. Current industry standards 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. Establishing a fixed price cap of \$35 would be impractical given inflationary pressures and fluctuations in material and production costs. The Department recommends either eliminating the monetary threshold or establishing a mechanism for periodic adjustment to reflect market conditions.

In addition, the Department respectfully recommends should the committee retain the establishment of a sports registry that a targeted appropriation be included to support implementation of the Act. The scope and complexity of the new licensure

categories, regulatory oversight, and administrative responsibilities created will require dedicated resources to ensure timely, consistent, and effective implementation.

Accordingly, the Department recommends that S.B. 148, S.D. 2, H.D. 2 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 Department respectfully requests an implementation period of twelve to eighteen months following enactment. This timeframe would allow the Boxing and Combat Sport Commission to work in coordination with the Department 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 new commission members, and for the Department to draft and adopt the necessary Hawai’i Administrative Rules, while ensuring continuity of licensing and combat sport events without disruption.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.