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Cooper, Kathy

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IRRC

**From:** John Cook [evolveohio@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 01, 2013 5:07 PM  
**To:** Schalles, Scott R.  
**Subject:** PA Rule Changes/John Cook Evolve MMA

2013 MAR -4 AM 9:09

Dear IRRC-

My name is John Cook and I am the owner and head trainer at Evolve MMA in Northeast Ohio.

I have been training MMA Athletes since 1996 and currently train and manage over 40 young men and women in this sport including top Pro talent Travis Clark, Chris Lozano, Max Ceneceros, Kyle Rozewski along with many more professionals and over 25 amateurs. I have personally been directly involved as a cornerman and coach for over 250 events. I also am a professional sports performance coach for elite athletes in many other sports. Evolve is home to over 800 members of all levels and our facility is world class with over 20,000 square feet of training space...I also employ 15 full time coaches and trainers. I also have competed in MMA since the early days of the sport and actually have 2 fights after 40 years old!

I am sending this email today to urge you to move forward with the proposed rule changes for amateurs in your state. We have participated in events in Pennsylvania and have many friends that are coaches, fighters and promoters. The talent pool in your state is excellent. Your commission is well respected and your judges and referees are fantastic. We wish to participate in more events in Pennsylvania but do to the rule differences we have avoided ammy events in the past. As a professional coach I can testify to the importance of ammys having a different set of rules that the Professionals. I agree that ammys should not be allowed to throw head kicks or elbows. But in order for these young fighters to be properly prepared for the rigors of the professional ranks, in my opinion and the opinion of many of my colleagues, we feel that it is imperative for fighters to be able to strike while on the ground and be allowed to compete without shinguards. As I have said before, I have trained hundreds of amateur fighters and been part of many competitions in Ohio. I have never had an athlete been seriously injured while competing with these rules.

I feel that with proper matchmaking and responsible refereeing fighters can safely participate in this sport with the proposed rule changes. Plus, fighters that are wish to compete professionally, are better prepared. Though we love to see the flood of Pennsylvania fighters coming to Ohio to compete, we would like to participate in your state on a regular basis and until these rules are changed it is difficult for our fighters to adjust to the current rules. Not to mention the cost involved in traveling across state lines to compete and the money the fighters lose by not being able to sell tickets to friends, family and friends while competing far away from their home towns.

It is imperative, as it is in all other contact sports, that athletes are exposed to rules that are as close to the highest level so they will be ready for the jump to the highest levels.

Thank you for your time and I hope you will consider the proposed rule changes as we would be excited, as will our Pennsylvania brothers and sisters to fight more often in your great state.

Best Regards,

John Cook  
owner and head coach  
Evolve MMA