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House of Representatives
 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
 Harrisburg

STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
 CHAIRMAN

2958

August 8, 2012

Gregory Sirb, Executive Director
 State Athletic Commission
 2601 North 3rd Street
 Harrisburg, PA 17110

Dear Mr. Sirb,

I am writing to you regarding the proposed rulemaking published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin* on July 28, 2012 (No. 16-53 Amateur Mixed Martial Arts Waiver) and would like to express my support for this proposed regulatory change.

As you know, current regulations contained in 58 Pa. Code § 29.29(b)(3)(i) (relating to acts constituting fouls) and § 29.27(c) (relating to equipment) prohibit amateur MMA contestants from striking an opponent's head while on the ground and require these amateur contestants to wear shin/instep pads during amateur MMA bouts. Additionally, professional MMA contestants are not subject to the striking to the head prohibition and shin/instep pad requirement. Given the physical nature of MMA, it is understandable that the Commission would provide, through regulation, additional safety standards for amateur MMA contestants as compared to professional MMA contestants. However, some amateur MMA contestants have gained sufficient experience to forego these rules, but current regulations do not permit the Commission to provide an exception for these more experienced amateur MMA contestants.

Current regulations are problematic for two main reasons. First, experienced amateur MMA contestants are hindered in their ability to transition to professional bouts, which aren't subject to the aforementioned regulations. Second, a significant number of Pennsylvania's amateur MMA contestants choose to compete in MMA competitions in other states. Some states do not prohibit striking an opponent's head while on the ground or require shin pads for amateur contestants, which puts Pennsylvania's amateur MMA contestants at a competitive disadvantage or encourages some of them to compete in other states in order to gain experience necessary to advance within the sport. Subsequently, this discourages some amateur MMA events from being held within the Commonwealth, especially in areas of the Commonwealth near states that do not have these requirements.

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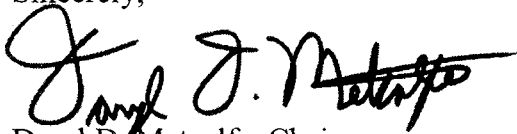
Page 2
Mr. Gregory Sirb

This proposed regulation is a common sense solution that maintains the safety of amateur MMA contestants competing in Pennsylvania while providing them with the opportunity to gain necessary experience to advance within the sport. Under the proposed regulation, amateur MMA contestants who have completed at least 3 amateur bouts can petition the Commission to waive the prohibition on striking to the head and the requirement to wear shin/instep pads. The Commission will be required to consider several factors that demonstrate the amateur contestant can safely compete when granting this waiver. I believe this proposed regulation could ultimately improve the safety of amateur MMA contestants in Pennsylvania because they would be permitted to experience professional rules prior to competing at a professional level or competing in another state.

Additionally, if experienced amateur MMA contestants could receive a waiver, more of Pennsylvania's amateur MMA contestants would want to compete in their home state, which could result in more amateur MMA events scheduled in Pennsylvania. These sporting events are beneficial to Pennsylvania's economy, and the Commonwealth should not hinder the expansion of this sport with unnecessary regulations.

This proposed regulatory change has my full support, and I look forward to its successful passage as it continues through the regulatory review process.

Sincerely,



Daryl D. Metcalfe, Chairman
House State Government Committee

DDM/cmw

cc: Silvan Lutkewitte, Chairman ✓
Independent Regulatory Review Commission

Charles T. McIlhinney, Chairman
Senate State Government Committee