

TESTIMONY  
March 11, 2008  
Commerce Committee

My name is Jim Krayeske and I reside in Watertown.

I am here as Chairman of the State Boxing Commission to speak in support of Raised Bill #5881 – an act concerning Financial Assistance for Amateur Boxing. I was appointed to the Commission by House Republican Leader Lawrence Cafero and named Chairman by Governor Rell.

In Connecticut, the State Boxing Commission has reestablished itself under the auspices of the Department of Public Safety after lingering for years in the Department of Consumer Protection. Under our recent resurgence, professional boxing has emerged with a big splash – holding 3 big events in 2007 at the Connecticut Convention Center, Hartford Expo Center and Harbor Yards in Bridgeport. Two of these events were Showtime Network events on National Television and viewed world wide.

We have over 25 independent boxing clubs in the state that are running with almost no funds. They could use some assistance in order to promote local and state events. These clubs are independently owned and operated and at the present time, depend solely on outside contributions to continue operating.

We are very fortunate to have Mr. Roland Roy of USA Boxing here in Connecticut to help keep the dreams alive and Detective Mike Kostrzewa of the Department of Public Safety, who coordinates all of the professional boxing in the state, the Casinos notwithstanding.

The economic impact for a USA Boxing Headquarters here in Connecticut would be a shot in the arm for some town or area, but more importantly the influence on the populace of teenagers and young adults would be enormous, as educational and work programs for both male and female boxers could be put in place. Some of the programs could be cooperative, such as the one in Waterbury, where Police Superintendent, Neil O'Leary and his PAL (Police Athletic League) have purchased and renovated an old Catholic Grammar School as its headquarters. It provides a great after school program of both physical and mental exercises for both inner city and suburban youths. This hard work by all individuals in the program could help them realize a dream and some day be recognized by their peers.

Dream on, yes, but remember that this has the potential to help our youth stay off the streets and keep out of the Juvenile Court System and/or the police blotter.

I urge you to please consider the funding for this project. Just think Colorado Springs, Colorado the largest Olympic Training Center. How about another here in Connecticut!

Thank you.