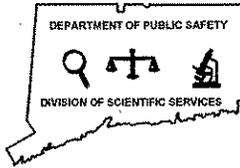




STATE OF CONNECTICUT



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

John A. Danaher III
Commissioner

Lieutenant Edwin S. Henion
Chief of Staff

March 3, 2009

Rep. Stephen Dargan, Co-Chairman
Sen. Andrea Stillman, Co-Chairman
Public Safety and Security Committee
Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

SB 1007 AN ACT REGULATING MIXED MARTIAL ARTS MATCHES

The Department of Public Safety opposes this bill.

The Department of Public Safety has neither the requisite staff, expertise, nor financial resources to adopt regulations and oversee mixed martial arts matches. Passage of this bill would have a significant fiscal and operational impact on the Department of Public Safety. In 2007, the Department of Public Safety was given responsibility and oversight for boxing matches in the state and received only one additional clerical position for the purpose of carrying out those duties. For the agency to meet this existing obligation it has been necessary to assign state troopers and department staff attorneys, taking them away from their normally assigned duties to oversee boxing events and promoters. If this bill were adopted, considerable time and effort would be needed to develop regulations. This would result in delays in FOI requests, delays in development of required contracts and memoranda of understanding, and inability to address delayed payments to the Department of Public Safety. Additionally overtime expenses would be incurred by DPS employees required to oversee and monitor mixed martial events.

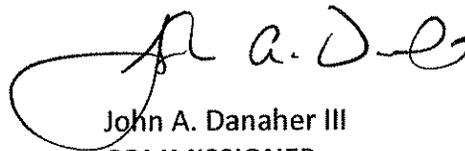
The agency's personal services account has already been subject to rescissions due to the state budget deficit. The Department of Public Safety has already had to divert resources in order to carry out the oversight of boxing matches in Connecticut.

The Department of Public Safety also has concerns regarding this proposed bill because it seems incompatible with the agency's primary mission of preserving the public safety and well being of Connecticut citizens. Unlike boxing, which is defined by CGS 29-143j-1(d) as a contest "in the sport or skill of fighting with the fist", mixed martial art matches consist of almost unlimited mutual combat. It allows an opponent to strike someone who is prone, who is rising from the ground, it permits the use of the knee or elbow, hitting with the inside

of the hand , the butt of the hand, backhand blows, body strikes to the kidneys, rabbit punches, kicks and leg strikes that would be considered fouls in a traditional boxing match. As a result, a competitor is at a greater risk of receiving serious injury. Should the Department of Public Safety be required to regulate such events and an injury does occur, it potentially exposes the state to liability for civil damages as the governmental authority regulating these matches.

Based on fiscal impact and adverse impact on operations to the agency alone, however, this bill should not go forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. A. Danaher III". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "D".

John A. Danaher III
COMMISSIONER
Department of Public Safety