

Charles J. Dowd, Jr.-Webster Bank Arena
Notes on MMA
March 6, 2012

*Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan and esteemed members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

*My name is Charles Dowd and I am the VP/Operations at Webster Bank Arena in Bridgeport, CT. I come before you today to testify in support of raised bill 326-An Act Concerning Mixed Martial Arts.

*One of the biggest challenges that our building faces is securing quality programming. Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) has become a well managed, highly regulated force on the world-wide sports scene. The sport has seen exponential growth in its live events and its television partnerships are the envy of other sports. Patrons at the Webster Bank Arena ask me and our staff on a regular basis..."when are you bringing MMA?"

*MMA has established its bona fides in the sports world. Its contestants are tested and monitored with great regularity. My focus today is the economic benefits that would accrue to our building and region if MMA were brought to Webster Bank Arena.

*Each anticipated sold out event (approximately 10,000 tickets) would create work opportunities for hundreds of employees and contractors of the building including but not limited to:

- Police
- Fire
- EMT
- Stagehands (IATSE)
- Parkers
- Event Staff (Ticket takers, Ushers)
- Concession Workers
- Others

*Those familiar with downtown Bridgeport know that unless there is an event at the Webster Bank Arena, the area slows down considerably. However, when we are open, the downtown area becomes alive as bar and restaurants enjoy a symbiotic relationship with our building. We are proud of our impact on the City of Bridgeport as we continuously bring in visitors from out of the area.

*In addition to the economic impact that MMA will have on our building, people and area, the state will see significant economic benefits from its presence in the form of:

- 10% Admission Tax on all tickets
- 5% Regulatory Tax
- Income Tax on Visiting Athletes
- Parking revenues in DOT lot(s)

*Passage of this bill is critical to our success as well as that of other venues in the state. As one of 3 states in the union, CT is ceding opportunities to our neighbors while sending CT resident's dollars to other states.

*Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I welcome any questions that you might have.