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TESTIMONY OF THE CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
TO THE  
PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE  
Thursday, February 7, 2013

RE: H.B. 5277 AN ACT LEGALIZING AND REGULATING MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

Senator Hartley, Representative Dargan and members of the Public Safety and Security Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5277.

In an era of shrinking revenue and stagnant economic growth, the State of Connecticut can no longer afford to ignore the profitability Mixed Martial Arts will bring to the state and a locality. Each Mixed Martial Arts event that takes place at Webster Bank Arena will generate approximately \$30,000 in wages for International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (I.A.T.S.E), \$12,250 for police overtime and \$1,500 fire personnel (attached, I have provided data that shows the overall value of one event to the state and employees). This figure doesn't take into account significant uptick in revenues for our local businesses on the dates of events at Webster Arena. For events such as concerts and special events, it is virtually impossible to secure a table at one of our downtown restaurants without a reservation, well in advance. The traffic from this event will go a long way in assisting us in marketing our city and provides many people the opportunity to learn about our various attractions.

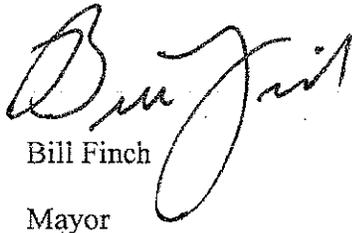
While objections to the Mixed Martial Arts have been raised due to the violent nature of the sport, I don't believe that this issue alone should prohibit the legalization of the sport in

Connecticut. Football and boxing also have well documented histories of injuries as a result of the sport, yet both are legal in the State of Connecticut. Steps have been taken in MMA to ensure the safety of participants before and during the events.

Mixed Martial Art is practiced in over a 100 countries and Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) is one of the fastest growing sports businesses in the world. This sport is legal in 48 states, except for Connecticut and New York, and it's available on a daily basis via national television contracts on both cable and broadcast television. In short, Mixed Martial Arts is a worldwide phenomenon and it's time for us to catch up.

I thank you for addressing this issue and for giving me the opportunity to provide testimony on this proposal.

Sincere Regards,



Bill Finch  
Mayor