

**Public Safety and Security Committee
JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT**

Bill No.: HB-5201

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING MUAY THAI AS A FORM OF MIXED MARTIAL ARTS.

Vote Date: 3/24/2021

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 2/11/2021

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Public Safety and Security Committee

Co-Sponsors:

Rep. Craig C. Fishbein, 90th Dist.

Rep. Greg S. Howard, 43rd Dist.

Rep. Cara Christine Pavalock-D'Amato, 77th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill would allow mixed martial arts to include Muay Thai Under current Connecticut law Muay Thai is not recognized. This would allow many tournaments and other competitions to be held Connecticut.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None Expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Cara Pavalock-D'Amato, Representative, State of Connecticut

Rep. Pavalock-D'Amato is in support of this bill. On May 7, 2013, CGA overwhelmingly passed legislation to allow matches to be held in our state. This original bill did not include Muay Thai under the definition of mixed martial arts. This bill would add Muay Thai to the definition of mixed martial arts which would give the Commissioner of DESPP jurisdiction over Muay Thai matches. The change would cost CT zero dollars to implement. This is a potential revenue maker as it would allow studios to host matches in Connecticut bringing with it out of state participants and their families.

Kirslyn Foster-Yee, Employee, Thornton Martial Arts and Fitness, LLC, East Hartford, CT

Ms. Foster-Yee is in support of this bill. Having the ability for martial arts studios to compete locally would increase revenue from competition, would aid in boosting our economy, as well as building CT into becoming a host destination for competition. Our students are present, eager, and ready to gain endless benefits that this sport has to offer.

Meaghan Kennedy, Coventry, CT

Ms. Kennedy is in support of this bill. Being a regular participant of this sport for some time, I appreciate the positive impact it has had on my life. Legalizing Muay Thai would bring awareness to the sport and others would look into this rewarding martial art. By legalization it would allow for competitions to occur in Connecticut both benefitting the state, as well as the sport, by boosting revenue.

Edward E. Thornton, Owner, Thornton Martial Arts

Mr. Thornton is in support of this bill. This bill would benefit martial arts studios across the state because it would allow them to hold youth tournaments in Connecticut, which under current law are prohibited by DEPS. Muay Thai is a respect-based sport steeped in culture of Thailand that dates back centuries, it has recently accepted as an Olympic Sport. It has gained popularity and deserves to be practiced and competed legally in Connecticut.

Bryand Perezespinoza, East Hartford, CT

Angel Sierra, Glastonbury, CT

Sergio Sierra, Glastonbury, CT

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed

Reported by: Bonnie Gray, Asst. Clerk

Date: 04/01/2021