

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 5553

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Regulating professional athletics.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions (originally sponsored by Senators Prentice and Winsley; by request of Department of Licensing).

**Senate Committee on Commerce, Trade, Housing & Financial Institutions**  
**House Committee on Commerce & Labor**

**Background:** The Department of Licensing (DOL) regulates boxing, wrestling and martial arts events held within the state. DOL licenses individuals to participate in these events, sets and collects fees for licensing, collects taxes on event revenue, controls conduct by participants, sets parameters for events, establishes safety and health requirements for events, and disciplines licensees.

**Summary:** The professional athletics program is excluded from the general state requirement that licensing programs be self supporting.

The director must prohibit events unless all the contestants are either licensed or trained by an amateur or professional sanctioning body recognized by the department.

Pankration, which is a combination of kickboxing and grappling, and muay thai, which is a combination of boxing, kicking and knee kicks, are included in the definition of martial arts and are under the authority of DOL.

Event physicians, referees, matchmakers, kickboxers, and martial artists must be licensed along with promoters, managers, boxers, seconds, wrestlers, inspectors, judges, timekeepers, and announcers. When applying for an annual license as a boxer, wrestler, kickboxer, martial artist, or referee, a physical by a physician is required.

The director may adopt rules limiting rounds and bouts and defining clean and sportsmanlike conduct for kickboxing, martial arts and wrestling. Contestants for boxing, kickboxing or martial arts must be examined by an event physician and may be subject to random urinalysis or chemical tests within 24 hours of an event. An event physician is a physician who is licensed by DOL and who is responsible for the exams. DOL may require the presence of an event physician at a wrestling event. An event physician must be present at a boxing, kickboxing, or martial arts event. DOL may select the event physician. A promoter is required to have an ambulance or paramedical unit at the event location, rather than within five miles of the event.

DOL may suspend or revoke a license or fine a licensee, including a manager, or applicant for violating the department's rules. Fines may not exceed \$5,000.

Gross receipts, for purposes of taxing event receipts, include only the face value of tickets sold and complimentary tickets redeemed and does not include revenue from the sale of souvenirs, programs, and other concessions. Complimentary tickets are subject to tax to the extent they exceed 300 tickets or are more than 5 percent of the total tickets sold for the event. The value of a complimentary ticket does not include charges and fees, such as dinner, gratuity, parking, or other charges that must be paid by the consumer to view the event.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	44	0	
House	95	0	(House amended)
Senate	43	1	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** July 25, 1999