

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1420

As of March 8, 2017

Title: An act relating to theatrical wrestling.

Brief Description: Concerning theatrical wrestling.

Sponsors: House Committee on Business & Financial Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Hudgins, MacEwen and Bergquist).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/03/17, 95-2.

Committee Activity: Commerce, Labor & Sports: 3/09/17.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a theatrical wrestling school license and permits the schools to schedule a limited number of public performances.
- Exempts trainees at a theatrical wrestling school from licensure.
- Requires wrestling show promoters to have an emergency technician present during the wrestling show.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, LABOR & SPORTS

Staff: Susan Jones (786-7404)

Background: Regulation and Definition. The Department of Licensing (Department) regulates boxing, martial arts, kickboxing, and wrestling events. Wrestling events are defined by statute to mean "a form of sports entertainment in which the participants display their skills in a physical struggle against each other in the ring and either the outcome may be predetermined or the participants do not necessarily strive to win, or both."

Licensure. Wrestlers, boxers, martial arts participants, promoters, and others involved with the events must obtain a license from the Department unless exempt. The Department currently requires that wrestling event promoters pay a fee equal to 6 percent of the gross receipts for any event held under the promoter license, and a separate license fee is assessed to participants and promoters. Events held at a school, college, or university in which all participants are students are exempt from regulation.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Medical Personnel Requirement. The promoter of a wrestling, boxing, or martial arts event must, at the promoter's own expense, have an ambulance or paramedical unit on site at the event. The Department may, at its discretion, require the presence of a physician at a wrestling event and may require the medical examination of a participant.

Summary of Bill: Licensure and Definitions. A new license is created for a theatrical wrestling school. Theatrical wrestling is defined as the performance of sports entertainment in which: (1) two or more participants work together in a performance of mock combat in a ring for the purpose of entertainment; and (2) the outcome is predetermined, and/or the participants do not necessarily strive to win. A theatrical wrestling school is defined as a facility that offers training in theatrical wrestling. A wrestling event is defined as a demonstration of theatrical wrestling presented to the public.

Wrestling Events. A theatrical wrestling school may hold wrestling shows at the school facility. A school may also hold a limited number of wrestling shows off the school premises. The shows must be for training purposes. Theatrical wrestling schools may charge an admission fee for the shows. These shows may be held without a promoter license. Any wrestling show presented by a theatrical wrestling school must feature at least 80 percent amateur participants. The Department must adopt rules regarding the shows. Wrestling participants engaged in training or a wrestling show at a theatrical wrestling school are exempt from licensure.

Medical Personnel Requirement. Any wrestling show presented by a theatrical wrestling school must have an ambulance or paramedical unit or an emergency medical technician licensed at the event location.

Legislative findings are provided.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.