

Public Law 104-272  
104th Congress

An Act

To provide for the safety of journeymen boxers, and for other purposes.

Oct. 9, 1996

[H.R. 4167]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

Professional  
Boxing Safety  
Act of 1996.  
15 USC 6301  
note.

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the "Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996".

**SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

15 USC 6301.

For purposes of this Act:

(1) **BOXER.**—The term "boxer" means an individual who fights in a professional boxing match.

(2) **BOXING COMMISSION.**—(A) The term "boxing commission" means an entity authorized under State law to regulate professional boxing matches.

(3) **BOXER REGISTRY.**—The term "boxer registry" means any entity certified by the Association of Boxing Commissions for the purposes of maintaining records and identification of boxers.

(4) **LICENSEE.**—The term "licensee" means an individual who serves as a trainer, second, or cut man for a boxer.

(5) **MANAGER.**—The term "manager" means a person who receives compensation for service as an agent or representative of a boxer.

(6) **MATCHMAKER.**—The term "matchmaker" means a person that proposes, selects, and arranges the boxers to participate in a professional boxing match.

(7) **PHYSICIAN.**—The term "physician" means a doctor of medicine legally authorized to practice medicine by the State in which the physician performs such function or action.

(8) **PROFESSIONAL BOXING MATCH.**—The term "professional boxing match" means a boxing contest held in the United States between individuals for financial compensation. Such term does not include a boxing contest that is regulated by an amateur sports organization.

(9) **PROMOTER.**—The term "promoter" means the person primarily responsible for organizing, promoting, and producing a professional boxing match.

(10) **STATE.**—The term "State" means each of the 50 States, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and any territory or possession of the United States.

15 USC 6302. **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

The purposes of this Act are—

- (1) to improve and expand the system of safety precautions that protects the welfare of professional boxers; and
- (2) to assist State boxing commissions to provide proper oversight for the professional boxing industry in the United States.

15 USC 6303. **SEC. 4. BOXING MATCHES IN STATES WITHOUT BOXING COMMISSIONS.**

No person may arrange, promote, organize, produce, or fight in a professional boxing match held in a State that does not have a boxing commission unless the match is supervised by a boxing commission from another State and subject to the most recent version of the recommended regulatory guidelines certified and published by the Association of Boxing Commissions as well as any additional relevant professional boxing regulations and requirements of such other State.

15 USC 6304. **SEC. 5. SAFETY STANDARDS.**

No person may arrange, promote, organize, produce, or fight in a professional boxing match without meeting each of the following requirements or an alternative requirement in effect under regulations of a boxing commission that provides equivalent protection of the health and safety of boxers:

- (1) A physical examination of each boxer by a physician certifying whether or not the boxer is physically fit to safely compete, copies of which must be provided to the boxing commission.
- (2) Except as otherwise expressly provided under regulation of a boxing commission promulgated subsequent to the enactment of this Act, an ambulance or medical personnel with appropriate resuscitation equipment continuously present on site.
- (3) A physician continuously present at ringside.
- (4) Health insurance for each boxer to provide medical coverage for any injuries sustained in the match.

15 USC 6305. **SEC. 6. REGISTRATION.**

(a) **REQUIREMENTS.**—Each boxer shall register with—

- (1) the boxing commission of the State in which such boxer resides; or
- (2) in the case of a boxer who is a resident of a foreign country, or a State in which there is no boxing commission, the boxing commission of any State that has such a commission.

(b) **IDENTIFICATION CARD.**—

(1) **ISSUANCE.**—A boxing commission shall issue to each professional boxer who registers in accordance with subsection (a), an identification card that contains each of the following:

- (A) A recent photograph of the boxer.
- (B) The social security number of the boxer (or, in the case of a foreign boxer, any similar citizen identification number or professional boxer number from the country of residence of the boxer).
- (C) A personal identification number assigned to the boxer by a boxing registry.

(2) **RENEWAL.**—Each professional boxer shall renew his or her identification card at least once every 2 years.

(3) PRESENTATION.—Each professional boxer shall present his or her identification card to the appropriate boxing commission not later than the time of the weigh-in for a professional boxing match.

**SEC. 7. REVIEW.**

15 USC 6306.

(a) PROCEDURES.—Each boxing commission shall establish each of the following procedures:

(1) Procedures to evaluate the professional records and physician's certification of each boxer participating in a professional boxing match in the State, and to deny authorization for a boxer to fight where appropriate.

(2) Procedures to ensure that, except as provided in subsection (b), no boxer is permitted to box while under suspension from any boxing commission due to—

(A) a recent knockout or series of consecutive losses;  
(B) an injury, requirement for a medical procedure, or physician denial of certification;

(C) failure of a drug test; or

(D) the use of false aliases, or falsifying, or attempting to falsify, official identification cards or documents.

(3) Procedures to review a suspension where appealed by a boxer, including an opportunity for a boxer to present contradictory evidence.

(4) Procedures to revoke a suspension where a boxer—

(A) was suspended under subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (2) of this subsection, and has furnished further proof of a sufficiently improved medical or physical condition; or

(B) furnishes proof under subparagraph (C) or (D) of paragraph (2) that a suspension was not, or is no longer, merited by the facts.

(b) SUSPENSION IN ANOTHER STATE.—A boxing commission may allow a boxer who is under suspension in any State to participate in a professional boxing match—

(1) for any reason other than those listed in subsection (a) if such commission notifies in writing and consults with the designated official of the suspending State's boxing commission prior to the grant of approval for such individual to participate in that professional boxing match; or

(2) if the boxer appeals to the Association of Boxing Commissions, and the Association of Boxing Commissions determines that the suspension of such boxer was without sufficient grounds, for an improper purpose, or not related to the health and safety of the boxer or the purposes of this Act.

**SEC. 8. REPORTING.**

15 USC 6307.

Not later than 48 business hours after the conclusion of a professional boxing match, the supervising boxing commission shall report the results of such boxing match and any related suspensions to each boxer registry.

**SEC. 9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST.**

15 USC 6308.

No member or employee of a boxing commission, no person who administers or enforces State boxing laws, and no member of the Association of Boxing Commissions may belong to, contract with, or receive any compensation from, any person who sanctions, arranges, or promotes professional boxing matches or who otherwise

has a financial interest in an active boxer currently registered with a boxer registry. For purposes of this section, the term "compensation" does not include funds held in escrow for payment to another person in connection with a professional boxing match. The prohibition set forth in this section shall not apply to any contract entered into, or any reasonable compensation received, by a boxing commission to supervise a professional boxing match in another State as described in section 4.

15 USC 6309.

**SEC. 10. ENFORCEMENT.**

(a) **INJUNCTIONS.**—Whenever the Attorney General of the United States has reasonable cause to believe that a person is engaged in a violation of this Act, the Attorney General may bring a civil action in the appropriate district court of the United States requesting such relief, including a permanent or temporary injunction, restraining order, or other order, against the person, as the Attorney General determines to be necessary to restrain the person from continuing to engage in, sanction, promote, or otherwise participate in a professional boxing match in violation of this Act.

**(b) CRIMINAL PENALTIES.**—

(1) **MANAGERS, PROMOTERS, MATCHMAKERS, AND LICENSEES.**—Any manager, promoter, matchmaker, and licensee who knowingly violates, or coerces or causes any other person to violate, any provision of this Act shall, upon conviction, be imprisoned for not more than 1 year or fined not more than \$20,000, or both.

(2) **CONFLICT OF INTEREST.**—Any member or employee of a boxing commission, any person who administers or enforces State boxing laws, and any member of the Association of Boxing Commissions who knowingly violates section 9 of this Act shall, upon conviction, be imprisoned for not more than 1 year or fined not more than \$20,000, or both.

(3) **BOXERS.**—Any boxer who knowingly violates any provision of this Act shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than \$1,000.

15 USC 6310.

**SEC. 11. NOTIFICATION OF SUPERVISING BOXING COMMISSION.**

Each promoter who intends to hold a professional boxing match in a State that does not have a boxing commission shall, not later than 14 days before the intended date of that match, provide written notification to the supervising boxing commission designated under section 4. Such notification shall contain each of the following:

(1) Assurances that, with respect to that professional boxing match, all applicable requirements of this Act will be met.

(2) The name of any person who, at the time of the submission of the notification—

(A) is under suspension from a boxing commission; and

(B) will be involved in organizing or participating in the event.

(3) For any individual listed under paragraph (2), the identity of the boxing commission that issued the suspension described in paragraph (2)(A).

**SEC. 12. STUDIES.**

15 USC 6311.

(a) **PENSION.**—The Secretary of Labor shall conduct a study on the feasibility and cost of a national pension system for boxers, including potential funding sources.

(b) **HEALTH, SAFETY AND EQUIPMENT.**—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall conduct a study to develop recommendations for health, safety, and equipment standards for boxers and for professional boxing matches.

(c) **REPORTS.**—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Labor shall submit a report to the Congress on the findings of the study conducted pursuant to subsection (a). Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall submit a report to the Congress on the findings of the study conducted pursuant to subsection (b).

**SEC. 13. PROFESSIONAL BOXING MATCHES CONDUCTED ON INDIAN RESERVATIONS.**

15 USC 6312.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(1) **INDIAN TRIBE.**—The term “Indian tribe” has the same meaning as in section 4(e) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b(e)).

(2) **RESERVATION.**—The term “reservation” means the geographically defined area over which a tribal organization exercises governmental jurisdiction.

(3) **TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.**—The term “tribal organization” has the same meaning as in section 4(l) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 450b(l)).

(b) **REQUIREMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a tribal organization of an Indian tribe may, upon the initiative of the tribal organization—

(A) regulate professional boxing matches held within the reservation under the jurisdiction of that tribal organization; and

(B) carry out that regulation or enter into a contract with a boxing commission to carry out that regulation.

(2) **STANDARDS AND LICENSING.**—If a tribal organization regulates professional boxing matches pursuant to paragraph (1), the tribal organization shall, by tribal ordinance or resolution, establish and provide for the implementation of health and safety standards, licensing requirements, and other requirements relating to the conduct of professional boxing matches that are at least as restrictive as—

(A) the otherwise applicable standards and requirements of a State in which the reservation is located; or

(B) the most recently published version of the recommended regulatory guidelines certified and published by the Association of Boxing Commissions.

**SEC. 14. RELATIONSHIP WITH STATE LAW.**

15 USC 6313.

Nothing in this Act shall prohibit a State from adopting or enforcing supplemental or more stringent laws or regulations not inconsistent with this Act, or criminal, civil, or administrative fines for violations of such laws or regulations.

15 USC 6301  
note.

**SEC. 15. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

The provisions of this Act shall take effect on January 1, 1997, except as follows:

(1) Section 9 shall not apply to an otherwise authorized boxing commission in the Commonwealth of Virginia until July 1, 1998.

(2) Sections 5 through 9 shall take effect on July 1, 1997.

Approved October 9, 1996.

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**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 4167 (H.R. 1186) (S. 187):**

**HOUSE REPORTS:** No. 104-833, Pt. 1 accompanying H.R. 1186 (Comm. on Commerce).

**SENATE REPORTS:** No. 104-159 accompanying S. 187 (Comm. on Commerce, Science, and Transportation).

**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:**

Vol. 141 (1995): Oct. 31, S. 187 considered and passed Senate.

Vol. 142 (1996): Sept. 25, H.R. 4167 considered and passed House.  
Sept. 27, considered and passed Senate.