

SB 2399



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**PRESENTATION OF THE
PROFESSIONAL & VOCATIONAL LICENSING DIVISION**

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE
Regular Session of 2010

Wednesday, February 17, 2010
9:15 a.m.

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL NO. 2399, RELATING TO MIXED MARTIAL ARTS.

TO THE HONORABLE ROSALYN H. BAKER, CHAIR,
AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

My name is Alan Taniguchi, Executive Officer with the Professional and Vocational Licensing Division of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs ("Department"). The Department thanks you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of S.B. No. 2399, Relating to Mixed Martial Arts.

The purpose of this bill is to amend the law relating to the regulation of mixed martial arts ("MMA") by:

- (1) Requiring the licensure of amateur MMA promoters;
- (2) Allowing the Department to delegate the supervision of amateur MMA to a recognized national amateur MMA organization; and

- (3) Requiring all amateur MMA contestants to pass a physical exam performed by a licensed physician.

The main purpose of regulation of MMA is to protect the health and safety of the MMA contestant. Currently Chapter 440E, HRS, exempts amateur MMA from regulation. An amateur MMA promoter does not have to provide medical insurance for the contestants, ringside physicians or an ambulance at the event. Contestants are not required to successfully pass a physical exam or provide blood work to anyone for review.

While there have been numerous MMA shows since the regulation of MMA took effect in July 2009, only one entity has obtained a MMA promoter's license. All the other MMA promoters claim they are not paying the contestants and are "amateur" promoters and thus exempt from regulation. Although many of these promoters paid the contestants prior to July 2009, it is difficult to prove that they are now not paying contestants.

This bill will close the "loop hole" that is currently being used by promoters to avoid the expense of addressing health and safety concerns.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.