

LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA
ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SESSION

LEGISLATIVE BILL 635

Introduced by Hansen, 16.

Read first time January 22, 2025

Committee: General Affairs

1 A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to the State Athletic Commissioner; to amend
2 sections 81-8,129, 81-8,130, 81-8,130.01, 81-8,132, 81-8,133,
3 81-8,133.01, 81-8,134, 81-8,135, 81-8,138, and 81-8,139, Reissue
4 Revised Statutes of Nebraska; to authorize the regulation of
5 professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional mixed
6 martial arts on ice, amateur kickboxing, and slap fighting; to
7 harmonize provisions; and to repeal the original sections.
8 Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

1 **Section 1.** Section 81-8,129, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska,
2 is amended to read:

3 81-8,129 The State Athletic Commissioner shall have sole direction,
4 management, control, and jurisdiction over all professional mixed martial
5 arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional mixed
6 martial arts on ice, professional boxing, professional kickboxing,
7 professional bare-knuckle boxing, and professional sparring matches and
8 exhibitions, ~~and~~ all amateur mixed martial arts and amateur kickboxing
9 matches and exhibitions, and all slap fighting matches and exhibitions to
10 be held within the state, except such as are conducted by universities,
11 colleges, high schools, the military, and recognized amateur associations
12 for contestants under sixteen years of age. No professional boxers,
13 professional mixed martial arts contestants, professional bare-knuckle
14 mixed martial arts contestants, professional mixed martial arts on ice
15 contestants, professional kickboxers, professional bare-knuckle boxers,
16 ~~or~~ amateur mixed martial arts contestants, amateur kickboxing
17 contestants, or slap fighting contestants who have attained the age of
18 sixteen, shall participate in a match or exhibition for a prize or purse,
19 or at which an admission fee is charged, either directly or indirectly,
20 in the form of dues or otherwise, in this state except by a club,
21 association, organization, or person licensed by the commissioner, as
22 provided in section 81-8,130, and in pursuance of a license granted by
23 the commissioner for such match or exhibition under section 81-8,130.01.

24 **Sec. 2.** Section 81-8,130, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
25 amended to read:

26 81-8,130 (1) The State Athletic Commissioner may issue an annual
27 license for conducting amateur mixed martial arts or amateur kickboxing
28 matches or exhibitions to any club, association, or organization. Each
29 application for a license shall be accompanied by a fee set by the
30 commissioner in rule and regulation. Such fee shall be not less than
31 twenty-five dollars and not more than one hundred dollars.

1 (2) The State Athletic Commissioner may issue an annual license for
2 conducting slap fighting matches or exhibitions to any club, association,
3 or organization. Each application shall be accompanied by a fee set by
4 the commissioner in rule and regulation. Such fee shall be not less than
5 twenty-five dollars and not more than one hundred dollars.

6 **Sec. 3.** Section 81-8,130.01, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska,
7 is amended to read:

8 81-8,130.01 Licenses and permits may be issued to professional mixed
9 martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional
10 mixed martial arts on ice, professional boxing, professional kickboxing,
11 or professional bare-knuckle boxing promoters, whether persons, clubs, or
12 associations, for the sole purpose of conducting professional matches
13 under such rules and regulations as the State Athletic Commissioner shall
14 adopt. Each application for such license shall be accompanied by a fee
15 set by the commissioner in rule and regulation. Such fee shall be not
16 less than one hundred dollars and not more than three hundred dollars. If
17 the promoter is an individual, the application shall include his or her
18 social security number.

19 **Sec. 4.** Section 81-8,132, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
20 amended to read:

21 81-8,132 No license shall be granted unless the licensee has
22 executed a bond in the sum of not less than one thousand dollars in the
23 case of amateur mixed martial arts, amateur kickboxing, or slap fighting,
24 nor less than five thousand dollars in the case of professional mixed
25 martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional
26 mixed martial arts on ice, professional boxing, professional kickboxing,
27 or professional bare-knuckle boxing. The license shall be approved by the
28 State Athletic Commissioner, conditioned on the faithful compliance by
29 the licensee with the provisions of sections 81-8,129 to 81-8,142.01, the
30 rules and regulations of the commissioner, and such other laws of the
31 state as may be applicable to anything done by the licensee in pursuance

1 of the license.

2 **Sec. 5.** Section 81-8,133, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
3 amended to read:

4 81-8,133 The State Athletic Commissioner is authorized to grant
5 licenses to competent referees, upon an application and the payment of a
6 fee set by the commissioner in rule and regulation. Such fee shall be not
7 less than ten dollars and not more than forty dollars per annum. The
8 commissioner may revoke any license so granted for such cause as may be
9 deemed sufficient. At every professional boxing, professional mixed
10 martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional
11 mixed martial arts on ice, professional kickboxing, professional bare-
12 knuckle boxing, amateur mixed martial arts, amateur kickboxing, slap
13 fighting, or professional sparring match or exhibition, there shall be in
14 attendance a duly licensed referee, who shall direct and control the
15 match. The referee shall stop the match whenever he or she deems it
16 advisable, (1) because of the physical condition of the contestants or
17 one of them, (2) when one of the contestants is clearly outclassed by his
18 or her opponent, or (3) for any other sufficient reason. The referee
19 shall, at the termination of every professional boxing, professional
20 mixed martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts,
21 professional mixed martial arts on ice, professional kickboxing,
22 professional bare-knuckle boxing, amateur mixed martial arts, amateur
23 kickboxing, slap fighting, or professional sparring match or exhibition,
24 indicate a winner. The fees of the referee and other licensed officials
25 may be fixed by the commissioner and shall be paid by the licensed
26 organization.

27 **Sec. 6.** Section 81-8,133.01, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska,
28 is amended to read:

29 81-8,133.01 The State Athletic Commissioner may grant licenses to
30 qualified physicians, managers, matchmakers, and professional mixed
31 martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional

1 mixed martial arts on ice, professional boxing, professional kickboxing,
2 professional bare-knuckle boxing, or professional sparring match or
3 exhibition judges upon an application and payment of an annual fee set by
4 the commissioner in rule and regulation. Such fee for matchmakers shall
5 be not less than ten dollars and not more than one hundred dollars. Such
6 fee for physicians, managers, and professional mixed martial arts,
7 professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional mixed martial
8 arts on ice, professional boxing, professional kickboxing, professional
9 bare-knuckle boxing, or professional sparring match or exhibition judges
10 shall be not less than ten dollars and not more than twenty dollars. The
11 commissioner may also grant licenses to qualified timekeepers,
12 contestants, and seconds upon an application and payment of an annual fee
13 set by the commissioner in rule and regulation. Such fee shall be not
14 less than ten dollars and not more than twenty dollars. The application
15 shall include the applicant's social security number. No person shall
16 serve as physician, manager, matchmaker, or judge at any professional
17 mixed martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts,
18 professional mixed martial arts on ice, professional boxing, professional
19 kickboxing, professional bare-knuckle boxing, or professional sparring
20 match or exhibition who is not licensed as such. No person shall serve as
21 timekeeper or contestant at any professional mixed martial arts,
22 professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional mixed martial
23 arts on ice, professional boxing, professional kickboxing, or
24 professional bare-knuckle boxing match who is not licensed as such. The
25 commissioner shall have summary authority to stop any match at which any
26 person is serving in violation of the provisions of this section. Any
27 license granted under the provisions of this section may be revoked for
28 cause.

29 **Sec. 7.** Section 81-8,134, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
30 amended to read:

31 81-8,134 (1) Any professional boxing match, professional mixed

1 martial arts match, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts,
2 professional mixed martial arts on ice, professional kickboxing match,
3 professional bare-knuckle boxing match, ~~or~~ amateur mixed martial arts
4 match, amateur kickboxing match, or slap fighting match conducted in this
5 state which is labeled or promoted as a championship match shall have
6 regional or national significance and the approval of a nationally
7 recognized professional boxing, mixed martial arts, bare-knuckle mixed
8 martial arts, mixed martial arts on ice, kickboxing, ~~or~~ bare-knuckle
9 boxing, kickboxing, or slap fighting association.

10 (2) Professional boxing, professional kickboxing, professional bare-
11 knuckle boxing, or professional sparring matches or exhibitions shall not
12 exceed ten rounds in length, except in a championship match, which shall
13 not exceed fifteen rounds. No round shall be longer than three minutes.
14 At least one minute shall intervene between rounds. Except for
15 professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional kickboxing, or
16 professional bare-knuckle boxing matches, the contestants shall wear
17 during the contest gloves weighing at least eight ounces each.

18 (3) Professional mixed martial arts and professional bare-knuckle
19 mixed martial arts matches or exhibitions shall not exceed three rounds
20 in length, except in a championship match, which shall not exceed five
21 rounds in length. No round shall be longer than five minutes. At least
22 one minute shall intervene between rounds.

23 (4) No professional boxing contestant, professional mixed martial
24 arts contestant, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts contestant,
25 professional mixed martial arts on ice contestant, professional
26 kickboxing contestant, professional bare-knuckle boxing contestant, ~~or~~
27 amateur mixed martial arts contestant, amateur kickboxing contestant, or
28 slap fighting contestant shall be allowed to participate or take part in
29 any contest in this state unless a duly licensed physician shall certify
30 in writing that such contestant has taken a physical examination the day
31 of the contest and is physically fit to engage in the proposed contest.

1 **Sec. 8.** Section 81-8,135, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
2 amended to read:

3 81-8,135 Every licensee conducting or holding any professional mixed
4 martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional
5 mixed martial arts on ice, amateur mixed martial arts, amateur
6 kickboxing, professional boxing, professional kickboxing, or professional
7 bare-knuckle boxing or slap fighting match shall furnish to the State
8 Athletic Commissioner a written report showing the articles of agreement
9 between the contestants, the number of tickets sold for each contest, the
10 amount of the gross receipts thereof, the gross receipts from sale of any
11 television rights, and such other matters as the commissioner shall
12 prescribe. Within such time the licensee shall pay to the commissioner a
13 tax of five percent of the total gross receipts of any professional mixed
14 martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional
15 mixed martial arts on ice, professional boxing, professional kickboxing,
16 or professional bare-knuckle boxing match or exhibition, exclusive of
17 state and federal taxes, except the gross receipts from sale of
18 television rights, and five percent of such rights, and five percent of
19 the total gross receipts of any amateur mixed martial arts, amateur
20 kickboxing, or slap fighting match or exhibition, exclusive of state and
21 federal taxes, except that if such match or exhibition is conducted as an
22 incidental feature in any event or entertainment of a different
23 character, such portion of the total receipts shall be paid to the state
24 as the commissioner may determine, or as may be fixed by rule adopted
25 under section 81-8,139.

26 **Sec. 9.** Section 81-8,138, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
27 amended to read:

28 81-8,138 No contestant in any match or exhibition shall be paid for
29 services until the same are rendered, and should it be determined by the
30 State Athletic Commissioner that a contestant did not give an honest
31 exhibition of his or her skill, he or she shall not be paid. Any

1 contestant who shall participate in any sham or fake professional boxing,
2 professional mixed martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed martial
3 arts, professional mixed martial arts on ice, professional kickboxing,
4 professional bare-knuckle boxing, ~~or~~ amateur mixed martial arts, amateur
5 kickboxing, or slap fighting match or exhibition shall be disqualified
6 and shall not thereafter be permitted to contend in any match or
7 exhibition in this state, and any contestant who shall participate in any
8 sham or fake professional boxing, professional mixed martial arts,
9 professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional mixed martial
10 arts on ice, professional kickboxing, professional bare-knuckle boxing,
11 ~~or~~ amateur mixed martial arts, amateur kickboxing, or slap fighting match
12 or exhibition shall be guilty of a violation of sections 81-8,128 to
13 81-8,142.01.

14 **Sec. 10.** Section 81-8,139, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
15 amended to read:

16 81-8,139 (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section,
17 the State Athletic Commissioner shall adopt and promulgate such rules and
18 regulations for the administration and enforcement of sections 81-8,128
19 to 81-8,142.01 as he or she may deem necessary. Such rules and
20 regulations shall include, but not be limited to, the establishment of
21 written criteria for the granting and revoking of licenses, the setting
22 of license fees, and the qualification requirements for those to be
23 licensed as referees, physicians, managers, matchmakers, and professional
24 boxing, professional mixed martial arts, professional bare-knuckle mixed
25 martial arts, professional mixed martial arts on ice, professional
26 kickboxing, professional bare-knuckle boxing, or professional sparring
27 match or exhibition judges. He or she shall have the power and may
28 control and limit the number of professional mixed martial arts,
29 professional bare-knuckle mixed martial arts, professional mixed martial
30 arts on ice, amateur mixed martial arts, amateur kickboxing, professional
31 boxing, professional kickboxing, professional bare-knuckle boxing, slap

1 fighting, or professional sparring matches or exhibitions given, or to be
2 held, each year, or within one week, in any city or town, or by any
3 organization. He or she may fine any licensee, except amateur
4 contestants, an amount not to exceed one thousand dollars and may suspend
5 for a period, not to exceed one year, any licensee's right to participate
6 in or conduct any match or exhibition for unsportsmanlike conduct while
7 engaged in or arising directly from any match or exhibition, failure to
8 compete in good faith, engaging in any sham match or exhibition, or the
9 use of threatening and abusive language toward officials, other
10 contestants, or spectators.

11 (2) The State Athletic Commissioner may adopt and promulgate rules
12 and regulations to identify a list of substances banned for use by any
13 amateur or professional contestant and may require any contestant to
14 submit to a test for banned substances as a condition for allowing the
15 contestant's participation in a match or exhibition.

16 (3) The State Athletic Commissioner may suspend an amateur or
17 professional contestant from competition for a period not to exceed one
18 year and may fine a professional contestant an amount not to exceed one
19 thousand five hundred dollars or forty percent of the prize or purse,
20 whichever is greater, for a first offense of failing a test for a banned
21 substance on the list developed pursuant to subsection (2) of this
22 section or for refusing to submit to such a test. He or she may suspend
23 an amateur or professional contestant from competition for a period not
24 to exceed three years and may fine a professional contestant an amount
25 not to exceed three thousand dollars or seventy percent of the prize or
26 purse, whichever is greater, for any second such offense. He or she may
27 suspend an amateur or professional contestant from competition for life
28 and may fine a professional contestant an amount not to exceed five
29 thousand dollars or one hundred percent of the prize or purse, whichever
30 is greater, for any third or subsequent such offense. For purposes of
31 determining if an offense under this subsection is a first, second,

1 third, or subsequent offense, failing a test for banned substances and
2 refusing to submit to such a test shall be considered the same offense.

3 (4) Before levying an administrative fine pursuant to this section,
4 the State Athletic Commissioner shall set the matter for hearing.
5 Proceedings to levy an administrative fine shall be contested cases
6 prosecuted and appealable pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act.
7 At least ten days before the hearing, the State Athletic Commissioner
8 shall serve notice of the time, date, and place of the hearing upon the
9 licensee or other violator by personal or certified mail service.

10 (5) The State Athletic Commissioner shall remit any administrative
11 fines collected under this section to the State Treasurer for
12 distribution in accordance with Article VII, section 5, of the
13 Constitution of Nebraska.

14 **Sec. 11.** Original sections 81-8,129, 81-8,130, 81-8,130.01,
15 81-8,132, 81-8,133, 81-8,133.01, 81-8,134, 81-8,135, 81-8,138, and
16 81-8,139, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, are repealed.