
In 2000 the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act commonly referred to as the Ali Act amended the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 to improve the safety and welfare of professional boxers and to ensure that promoters were truthful in their financial dealings with them.



Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act

Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act (codified to 15 U.S.C. §§ 6301-6313) Amends the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (the Act) to direct the Association of Boxing Commissions (ABC) to develop and approve by a vote of at least a majority of its member State boxing commissioners guidelines for:

1. minimum contractual provisions that should be included in bout agreements and boxing contracts; and
2. objective and consistent written criteria for the ratings of professional boxers. Expresses the sense of Congress that State boxing commissions should follow such guidelines.

Declares that a contract provision shall be considered to be in restraint of trade, contrary to public policy, and unenforceable, against any boxer to the extent that it contains a coercive provision as provided in this Act and that:

1. it is for a period greater than a year; or
2. the other boxer under contract to the promoter came under that contract pursuant to a coercive provision. Specifies that no subsequent contract provision extending any rights or compensation covered herein shall be enforceable against a boxer if the effective date of the contract containing such provision is earlier than three months before the expiration of the relevant time period. Makes this paragraph applicable to any contract between a commercial broadcaster and a boxer, or granting any rights with respect to that boxer, involving a broadcast in or affecting interstate commerce, regardless of the broadcast medium.

Prohibits a boxing service provider from requiring a boxer to grant any future promotional rights as a requirement of competing in a professional boxing match (match) that is a mandatory bout under the rules of the sanctioning organization.

Prohibits a sanctioning organization from receiving any compensation, directly or indirectly, in connection with a match until:

1. it provides the boxers with notice that the sanctioning organization shall, within seven days after receiving a request from a boxer questioning that organization's rating of the boxer, provide to the boxer a written explanation of the organization's criteria, its rating of

the boxer, and the rationale or basis for its rating (including a response to any specific questions submitted by the boxer), and submits a copy of its explanation to the ABC; and

2. with respect to a change in the rating of a boxer previously rated by such organization in the top ten boxers, the organization posts a copy, within seven days of such change, on the Internet website or home page, if any, including an explanation of such change, for a period of not less than 30 days, and provides a copy of the rating change and explanation to an association to which at least a majority of the State boxing commissions belong.

Prohibits a sanctioning organization from receiving any compensation, directly or indirectly, in connection with a match unless, not later than January 31 of each year, it submits to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and to the ABC:

1. a complete description of the organization's ratings criteria, policies, and general sanctioning fee schedule;
2. the bylaws of the organization;
3. the appeals procedure of the organization for a boxer's rating; and
4. a list and business address of the organization's officials who vote on the ratings of boxers.

Requires a sanctioning organization to:

1. provide such information in writing and, for any document greater than two pages in length, also in electronic form; and
2. promptly notify the FTC of any material change in the information submitted.

Directs the FTC to make such information received available to the public. Allows the FTC to assess sanctioning organizations a fee to offset the costs it incurs in processing the information and making it available to the public. Permits a sanctioning organization, in lieu of submitting the information required above to the FTC, to provide the information to the public by maintaining a website on the Internet that:

1. is readily accessible by the general public using generally available search engines and does not require a password or payment of a fee for full access to all the information;
2. contains all the information required to be submitted to the FTC in an easy to search and use format; and
3. is updated whenever there is a material change in the information.

Sets forth provisions regarding required disclosures:

1. to State boxing commissions by sanctioning organizations;
2. for promoters; and



3. for judges and referees.



Provides that neither a boxing commission nor an Attorney General may disclose to the public any matter required to be furnished by a promoter under this Act, except to the extent required in a legal, administrative, or judicial proceeding. Specifies that if a State law governing a boxing commission requires that such information be made public, a promoter is not required to file such information with such State if the promoter files such information with the ABC.

Prohibits any person from arranging, promoting, organizing, producing, or fighting in a match unless all referees and judges participating have been certified and approved by the boxing commission responsible for regulating the match in the State where the match is held.

Amends the Act to prohibit:

1. a promoter from having a direct or indirect financial interest in the management of a boxer; or
2. a manager from having a direct or indirect financial interest in the promotion of a boxer, or from being employed by or receiving compensation or other benefits from a promoter, except for amounts received as consideration under the manager's contract with the boxer. Specifies that this provision does not prohibit a boxer from acting as his own promoter or manager, and that it only applies to boxers participating in a boxing match of ten rounds or more.

Prohibits an officer or employee of a sanctioning organization from receiving any compensation, gift, or benefit from a promoter, boxer, or manager, except for the receipt of:

1. payment by a promoter, boxer, or manager of a sanctioning organization's published fee for sanctioning a match or reasonable expenses in connection therewith if the payment is reported to the responsible boxing commission; or
2. the receipt of a gift or benefit of de minimis value.

Amends the Act to set penalties for violation of anti-exploitation, sanctioning organization, or disclosure provisions. Authorizes specified civil actions by States and a private right of action by any boxer suffering economic injury because of a violation of this Act. Provides that nothing in this Act authorizes enforcement against the FTC, specified Federal or State officers or entities, or a boxer acting in his capacity as a boxer.

Amends the Act to:

1. define "promoter" to exclude a hotel, casino, resort, or other commercial establishment hosting or sponsoring a professional boxing match unless the establishment is primarily

responsible for organizing, promoting, and producing the match, and there is no other person primarily responsible for organizing, promoting, and producing the match; and



2. include the Virgin Islands within the definition of "State" under the Act. Defines "suspension" to include revocation of a boxing license.

Requires each boxing commission to establish procedures to:

1. ensure that no boxer is permitted to box (with exceptions) while under suspension from any boxing commission due to unsportsmanlike conduct or other inappropriate behavior inconsistent with generally accepted methods of competition in a match; and
2. review a suspension where appealed by a licensee, manager, matchmaker, promoter, or other boxing service provider (currently limited to appeals by a boxer).

Changes the renewal period for professional boxer identification cards from two to four years.

Provides that if no State commission is available to supervise a boxing match:

1. the match may not be held unless it is supervised by an association of boxing commissions to which at least a majority of the States belong; and
2. any reporting or other requirement relating to a supervising commission allowed under the Act shall be deemed to refer to such entity.

Expresses the sense of Congress that a boxing commission should, upon issuing an identification card to a boxer, make an appropriate health and safety disclosure to that boxer, including the risks associated with boxing (in particular, the risk and frequency of brain injury and the advisability that a boxer periodically undergo medical procedures designed to detect brain injury).

"H.R. 1832--106th Congress (1999): Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act."