

# OVERVIEW

THE AUDITOR  
STATE OF HAWAII

## Sunset Evaluation Update: Boxing Contests

### Summary

We evaluated the regulation of boxing contests under Chapter 440, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and conclude that the public interest is best served by continuation of the statute.

Unlike other regulatory programs, the purpose of regulating boxing contests is to protect the boxers rather than consumers. Serious injury or death has resulted from boxing contests. Under Chapter 440, no one may conduct a boxing contest or be a participant in these contests without being licensed. Even with licensing, boxing represents a risk to participants. Regulation merely reduces the risk of injury.

A five-member State Boxing Commission has jurisdiction and control over all professional and amateur boxing contests in Hawaii. The commission is placed for administrative purposes in the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs. The department's Professional and Vocational Licensing Division provides administrative support to the commission.

Our evaluation found that boxing contests and some of its participants should continue to be regulated to protect the contestants. Licensing requirements for amateur promoters, timekeepers, and matchmakers, however, are unnecessary. Further, the statutes and rules should be amended to reflect the current practices of the commission and to remove requirements that are unnecessary. We also found that the Boxing Commission is not consistently enforcing licensing requirements for boxers and ring officials.

### Recommendations and Response

We recommend that the Legislature continue the regulation of boxing contests under Chapter 440. We also recommend that the Legislature amend Chapter 440 to: (a) eliminate licensing requirements for amateur promoters, timekeepers, and matchmakers, (b) eliminate the requirement that professional promoters submit a credit report, current financial statement certified by a certified public accountant, tax clearance, and surety bond to obtain a promoters license, (c) eliminate the requirement for trust or escrow accounts for promoters to meet their financial obligation, and (d) allow the commission to determine the appropriate method of assuring proper payment of promoters' obligations and the frequency of health and safety clinics for boxing.

We further recommend that the commission amend its rules to eliminate unnecessary licensing requirements and ensure that the licensing requirements for professional boxers and referees are consistently enforced.

The commission agreed with or supported all our recommendations. In addition to eliminating the licensing requirements for amateur promoters, timekeepers, and matchmakers, the commission suggested that the licensing of amateur boxing seconds should be eliminated because the seconds are not compensated for their services.

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