

Mixed Martial Arts Bill Passes House

The House has sent a bill back to the Senate that would regulate amateur mixed martial arts (MMA) fights. Some professional MMA events escape regulation by claiming to be an amateur event, and enforcement mechanisms are weak in Iowa.

The sport has become increasingly popular and, over the past year, at least two incidents with amateur fights have raised concerns. Under Senate File 2286, a participant would now have to be 18 years old.

In 2009, a 17-year old amateur MMA contestant in Iowa suffered a crushed eye socket and needed \$20,000 of medical care. The promoter did not provide emergency medical care at the site and did not transport the injured teenager to a hospital. Also, this past year, a MMA contestant was paralyzed during a fight. This issue has been around the state capitol since 2002, in either the form of a ban, no regulations at all, or providing some type of regulations.

The House revised the definition of an event to mean the sale of merchandise and refreshments or the sale of tickets. Senate File 2286 now goes back to the Senate for consideration.