

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 8984



Introduced by **HONORABLE ROGELIO D. PACQUIAO**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

No doubt, the sport of boxing occupies a special place in the hearts of Filipinos. It has been a source of immense pride to our country, thanks to the long list of our boxers who have shown the greatness of Filipino spirit to the rest of the world. Boxing greats like Gabriel "Flash" Elorde, Rolando Navarrete, Nonito Donaire, and Manny "Pacman" Pacquiao, serve as inspiration to the next generation of local boxers to continue our dominance in this sport. And in the recent years, other combat sports have also gained strong momentum and following among Filipinos, even spurring many promising local talents.

However, it is also a sad truth that most of our boxers and combatants are being neglected by the State, which is constitutionally mandated to "give priority to ... sports to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, and promote total human liberation and development" (Sec. 17, Art. II). Many have been accepting too low a pay every match just to sustain their families. They are in constant danger of medical complications, with occasional fatalities being reported. Facilities and equipment are scarce and expensive, making the cost of training too high for aspiring fighters. Worse, a great number do not receive constant support come retirement, condemning them into misery and infirmity in their later years.

These, among other problems, prove that the existing government infrastructure supposed to protect and promote our boxers and combatants'

welfare is unconscionably weak. It is not commensurate with the value we, as a society, attribute to these combat sports. The stature of boxing and combat sports in our country, as well as their inherently dangerous nature, justifies the creation of a Philippine Boxing and Combat Sports Commission (PBCSC), which would finally give our fighters the attention and support they have long deserved.

The proposed PBCSC will endeavor to strengthen the boxing and combat sports industry in the Philippines towards developing world-class professional boxers and combatants, and to utilize the sport for revenue and employment to the end of promoting the safety and welfare of fighters and providing supplemental assistance to the industry's registered stakeholders. Once created, the PBCSC will be able to provide and implement the necessary welfare incentives and benefits long overdue to all professional boxers and combatants who have brought, and continue to bring, honor and prestige to our country.

In view of all these, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



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AN ACT
CREATING THE PHILIPPINE BOXING AND COMBAT SPORTS COMMISSION
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress Assembled:

1 **SECTION 1. *Short Title.*** — This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Boxing
2 and Combat Sports Commission Act of 2021".

3 **SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.*** — It is the policy of the State to promote sports
4 to foster patriotism and nationalism, accelerate social progress, promote human
5 development, and contribute to economic growth and development.

6 The State shall provide focus to, and develop excellence in, professional
7 boxing and combat sports and ensure the development and safety of Filipino
8 professional boxers and combatants.

9 It shall also support the growth of professional boxing and combat sports
10 industry, and shall promote the country as an international/regional center for
11 professional boxing and combat sports competition, training, convention, and
12 tourism.

1 It shall also harness the participation, dedication and technical expertise of
2 stakeholders of the professional boxing and combat sports industry.

3 Towards these ends, the State shall establish a commission that will
4 formulate and implement a national policy for the development and growth of
5 professional boxing and combat sports.

6 **SEC. 3. *Definition of Terms.*** — For purposes of this Act, the following terms
7 shall be defined as follows:

8 (a) *Combat sports* refer to any of the following or a combination of any of the
9 following:

10 (1) Boxing or fist fighting in any of its styles;

11 (2) Kickboxing in any of its styles; and

12 (3) Any sport, martial art, or activity that involves, in accordance with
13 the applicable regulation, striking, kicking, hitting, grappling, throwing and/or
14 punching opponents.

15 (b) *Commission* refers to the Philippine Boxing and Combat Sports
16 Commission, created under Section 4 of this Act;

17 (c) *License* refers to a document, issued by the Commission, authorizing a
18 person or entity to perform duties connected with professional boxing and combat
19 sports;

20 (d) *Manager* refers to a person who acts as an agent or representative of a
21 professional boxer or combatant, and receives compensation for such acts;

22 (e) *Permit* refers to a document, issued by the Commission, authorizing a
23 person or entity to hold, promote or engage in the conduct or operation of a
24 professional boxing or combat sports match;

1 (f) *Professional boxer* refers to a boxer who is issued a license by the
2 Commission to fight in a professional boxing match for a sum of money or other
3 compensation, such as a salary or prize money;

4 (g) *Professional boxing match* refers to a boxing match between professional
5 boxers who shall receive money or other compensation for fighting in said match,
6 but shall not refer to a boxing contest that is organized by an amateur sports
7 organization;

8 (h) *Professional combatant* refers to a person who is issued a license by the
9 Commission to fight in a professional combat sports match for a sum of money
10 or other compensation, such as a salary or prize;

11 (i) *Professional combat sports match* refers to a sports match between
12 professional combatants who shall receive money or other compensation for
13 fighting in said match; and

14 (j) *Promoter* refers to a person, group of persons, or an entity, licensed as
15 such by the Commission and primarily responsible for organizing, promoting, and
16 producing a professional boxing or combat sports match. The term "promoter"
17 does not include a hotel, casino, resort, or other commercial establishment
18 hosting or sponsoring a professional boxing or combat sports match unless - (i)
19 the hotel, casino, resort, or other commercial establishment is primarily
20 responsible for organizing, promoting, and producing the match; or (ii) there is no
21 person, group of persons, or any other entity, who is primarily responsible for
22 organizing, promoting, and producing the match.

23 **SEC. 4. Creation of the Philippine Boxing and Combat Sports**
24 **Commission.** — To carry out the above declared policies, the Philippine Boxing

1 and Combat Sports Commission is hereby created. The Commission shall be
2 directly under the administrative supervision of the Office of the President.

3 **SEC. 5. Objectives.** — The Commission shall have the following objectives:

4 (a) Support the continued growth of professional boxing and combat sports
5 in the country;

6 (b) Encourage the discovery, training and development of world-class
7 professional boxers and combatants;

8 (c) Protect and enhance the welfare of professional boxers and combatants;
9 and

10 (d) In collaboration with the private sector, national government agencies,
11 and local government units (LGUs), promote and make the country as an
12 international/regional center for professional boxing and combat sports
13 competition, training, convention, and tourism

14 **SEC. 6. Composition.** — The Commission shall be composed of five (5)
15 members, as follows:

16 (a) A nationally-recognized advocate for the development and growth of
17 professional boxing and combat sports in the country, as Chairperson;

18 (b) The Secretary of the Department of Health (DOH) or his/her
19 representative, Member;

20 (c) The Secretary of the Department of Tourism (DOT) or his/her
21 representative, Member;

22 (d) The Secretary of the Department of the Interior and Local Government
23 (DILG) or his/her representative, Member; and

24 (e) A representative of the professional boxing and combat sports industry,
25 Member.

1 The representatives of the Secretaries of the DOH, DOT and DILG shall have
2 a rank not lower than a Bureau Director and must have knowledge, experience or
3 involved in: sports medicine and/or health emergency management, tourism
4 planning or convention management, and boxing and combat sports development,
5 respectively. The DILG Secretary may opt to designate the president of the League
6 of Provinces of the Philippines, or the League of Cities of the Philippines, or the
7 League of Municipalities of the Philippines as his duly authorized representative to
8 the Commission, in lieu of an official of the Department.

9 The Chairperson and the representative of the professional boxing and
10 combat sports industry shall be selected and appointed by the President of the
11 Philippines from nominees submitted by the professional boxing and combat sports
12 industry.

13 **SEC. 7. *Term of Office.*** — The Chairperson and the representative of the
14 professional boxing and combat sports industry shall have a term of six (6) years
15 and may be reappointed by the President of the Philippines. Any appointment to a
16 vacancy in the position of the Chairperson or the representative of the professional
17 boxing and combat sports industry that occurs before the expiration of the term
18 shall be for the unexpired portion of the term only.

19 The Chairperson and the industry representative may be suspended or
20 removed by the President of the Philippines for just cause as provided by law.

21 **SEC. 8. *Meetings and Quorum.*** — The Commission shall meet regularly
22 once a month or as often as the exigencies of the service may demand, upon the
23 call of the Chairperson or upon the request of at least two (2) members of the
24 Commission. The vote of a majority of the entire membership of the Commission
25 shall be necessary for the adoption of any rule, resolution, or decision.

1 **Sec. 9. Allowances and Per Diems.** — The Chairperson and Members of
2 the Commission shall be entitled to per diems, allowances and other reimbursable
3 expenses as prescribed by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

4 **Sec. 10. Powers and Duties of the Commission.** — The Commission shall
5 have the following powers and duties:

6 (a) Formulate, initiate, plan, and implement a national policy for the growth
7 of professional boxing and combat sports, and the discovery, training and
8 development of professional boxers and combatants;

9 (b) Formulate, promulgate, review, and update the rules and procedures in
10 order to regulate professional boxing and combat sports, in conformity with
11 international standards;

12 (c) Establish rules, set requirements, and collect fees for the grant or renewal
13 of a license to a professional boxer, combatant, coach, trainer, promoter, judge,
14 referee, and other ring officials and personnel, and for the issuance of a permit for
15 a professional boxing or combat sports match;

16 (d) For violation of any rule or requirement, including the conditions for the
17 issuance of a license or permit, impose administrative fines and penalties,
18 including the suspension or revocation of a license or permit;

19 (e) Act as a quasi-judicial body and, on its own motion or upon complaint of
20 any interested party, initiate, hear, and decide any investigation for any violation of
21 its rules and regulations and, in connection therewith, issue subpoena *ad*
22 *testificandum* and subpoena *duces tecum*

23 (f) Determine and set safety standards, including the presence and
24 availability of emergency medical personnel and services, in all professional boxing
25 and combat sports matches in the country;

1 (g) Establish a system of registration and licensing of boxers, combatants,
2 referees, trainers, seconds, cut man and other ring officials and personnel;

3 (h) Maintain an integrated registry of professional boxers, combatants,
4 coaches, trainers, judges, referees, promoters and other ring officials and
5 personnel;

6 (i) Seek or request the assistance and support of any government agency,
7 office or instrumentality, including government-owned or controlled corporations,
8 LGUs as well as nongovernmental organizations or institutions in pursuit of its
9 policies and programs;

10 (j) Establish a consultative mechanism, which shall provide a forum for
11 continuing dialogue between and among all stakeholders, in the implementation of
12 all laws, policies, programs, and projects relating to professional boxing and
13 combat sports;

14 (k) Establish and maintain linkages with international boxing and combat
15 sports organizations or institutions and counterpart agencies of foreign
16 governments, including the hosting of international conventions and conferences,
17 for the enhancement of standards and regulations on the conduct of professional
18 boxing and combat sports matches, on facilities and equipment used therein, and
19 the participation of professional boxers and combatants, particularly of Filipino
20 professional boxers and combatants in international events;

21 (l) Allocate resources for the implementation of national policies and
22 programs related to professional boxers and combatants;

23 (m) Submit an annual report on the implementation of this Act to the President
24 and to Congress; and

1 (n) Perform such other powers and functions as may be necessary to
2 effectively and efficiently carry out the provisions of this Act.

3 **SEC. 11. *Organizational Structure.*** — Subject to the approval of the DBM,
4 the Commission shall determine its organizational structure and staffing pattern,
5 create offices, divisions, or units as it may deem necessary, and appoint its officers
6 and employees in accordance with civil service laws, rules and regulations. The
7 remuneration structure for the positions in the staffing pattern shall strictly conform
8 to Republic Act No. 6758, otherwise known as the "Compensation and Position
9 Classification Act of 1989", as amended.

10 **SEC. 12. *Executive Director.*** — The Commission shall have a full-time
11 Executive Director who shall be responsible for implementing the policies, rules,
12 regulations and directives of the Commission; the management of the
13 Commission's daily operations; and for coordinating and supervising the activities
14 of the different offices, divisions, and units of the Commission.

15 The Executive Director shall have a term of six (6) years and may be
16 reappointed. He shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines upon the
17 nomination of the Commission.

18 The nominee to the Executive Director position must be of known probity and
19 integrity and shall have nationally recognized experience and comprehensive
20 knowledge in professional boxing and combat sports, and preferably has relevant
21 experience in the management of a government regulatory agency, policy
22 formulation, adjudication, and program and project delivery and management.

23 **SEC. 13. *Physical, Medical and Neurologic Examination Requirements.***
24 — No person or entity can arrange, promote, organize, or produce a professional
25 boxing and combat sports match without a physical, medical, neurologic and other

1 diagnostic examinations being conducted on each participating professional boxer
2 or combatant by a licensed physician, who is recognized by the Commission. The
3 recognized licensed physician shall likewise certify that the professional boxer or
4 combatant is physically fit to safely compete, in compliance with the requirements
5 of the Commission.

6 **Sec. 14. *Mandatory Rest Period.*** — There shall be an interval in which
7 professional boxers and combatants can compete in boxing contests and combat
8 sports matches, which shall be referred to as mandatory rest period. The duration
9 of the mandatory rest period shall be determined by the Commission.

10 **SEC. 15. *Emergency Medical Services.*** — A professional boxing and
11 combat sports match may be held only if:

12 (a) A licensed practicing physician, whose services are paid by the promoter
13 and duly registered with the Commission, is continuously present at the ringside of
14 the professional boxing and combat sports match;

15 (b) Ambulance services, with appropriate equipment and competent
16 personnel, shall be made available within the immediate vicinity of the ring by
17 DOH-accredited ambulance service providers; and

18 (c) A tertiary hospital is near the vicinity of the event.

19 The absence of any of the aforementioned requirements shall be a cause for
20 the non-issuance or the immediate cancellation of the permit to hold the
21 professional boxing and combat sports match.

22 **SEC. 16. *Social Pension and Health Care Benefits.*** — All professional
23 boxers and combatants shall be enrolled with the Social Security System (SSS),
24 Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), and the Home Development
25 Mutual Fund (HDMF) or PAG-IBIG, and shall be entitled to all the benefits in

1 accordance with the pertinent provisions of law. The enrollment of professional
2 boxers and combatants with, and the remittance of mandatory contributions to,
3 these government agencies shall be done by the manager of the professional
4 boxer or combatant: *Provided*, That in case the professional boxer or combatant is
5 not represented by a manager, it is the professional boxer or combatant who shall
6 register and remit his or her mandatory contributions.

7 The SSS shall develop and administer a separate social security program
8 for professional boxers and combatants. This program, subject to actuarial studies,
9 may have different contribution, pension, and other benefit schemes.

10 **SEC. 17. *Exemption from Travel Taxes and Fees.*** – A three-man
11 professional boxing or combat sports delegation, composed of the professional
12 boxer or combatant, the promoter or manager, and the trainer, to any international
13 competition shall be exempt from the payment of travel tax, airport tax and any
14 other travel related taxes or fees now or hereafter imposed by law or regulation.

15 **SEC. 18. *Alternative Livelihood Programs for Retired and/or injured***
16 ***Professional Boxers and Combatants.*** — The Commission, in coordination with
17 various stakeholders in the professional boxing and combat sports industry, with
18 the assistance of other government agencies and LGUs, shall establish or
19 spearhead an alternative livelihood training program for retired and/or injured
20 professional boxers and combatants.

21 **SEC. 19. *Compensation of Professional Boxing and Combat Sports***
22 ***Officials.*** — All professional boxing and combat sports officials involved in any
23 match shall not receive funds or compensation in any form, directly or indirectly,
24 from the promoter or its agents. Such funds or compensation shall be coursed
25 through and collected by the Commission for appropriate disbursement.

1 **SEC. 20. Professional Boxers and Combatants Welfare Development**

2 **Trust Fund.** — A Professional Boxers and Combatants Welfare Development
3 Trust Fund is hereby established to complement the budget for welfare benefits
4 and enhance and uplift the social and economic opportunities and conditions of
5 present and former professional boxers and combatants, including, but not limited
6 to, medical and health services; housing and livelihood assistance; and financial
7 assistance for education and capability building/training. The Commission shall set
8 the qualifications and requirements in the disbursement of the Trust Fund.

9 It shall be administered by the Commission as a special account in any
10 government bank. It shall be funded from administrative fines imposed by the
11 Commission, and contributions in the form of endowments, grants and donations
12 to the Trust Fund, which shall be exempted from donor and other taxes, charges
13 or fees imposed by the government: *Provided*, That in cases of donations from
14 foreign governments or other foreign institutions, acceptance thereof shall be
15 subject to the approval of the President of the Philippines upon recommendation
16 of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

17 **SEC. 21. Transitory Provisions.** — Upon the organization of the
18 Commission, the Boxing and Contact Sports Division of the GAB shall be
19 abolished: *Provided*, That its powers and functions shall be absorbed by the
20 Commission: *Provided, further*, That the officers and employees thereof shall
21 continue in a holdover capacity until such time as the new officers and employees
22 of the Commission shall have been duly appointed pursuant to the provisions of
23 this Act. All qualified regular or permanent employees who may be transferred to
24 the Commission shall not suffer any loss in seniority or rank or decrease in

1 emoluments. Any employee who cannot be absorbed by the Commission shall be
2 entitled to a separation pay under existing retirement laws.

3 All other functions, appropriations, funds, records, equipment, facilities, and
4 other assets of the GAB that are pertaining to the development and regulation of
5 professional boxing and combat sports shall be transferred to the Commission.

6 **SEC. 22. Appropriations.** — The amount necessary to fund the
7 implementation of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations
8 Act.

9 **SEC. 23. Implementing Rules and Regulations.** — Within ninety (90) days
10 from the start of the effectivity of this Act, the Commission shall, upon consultation
11 with national government agencies, LGUs, and the different stakeholders in the
12 professional boxing and combat sports industry, promulgate the implementing
13 rules and regulations of this Act.

14 **SEC. 24. Repealing Clause.** — All laws, presidential decrees or issuances,
15 executive orders, rules or regulations, or parts thereof that are inconsistent with
16 the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

17 **SEC. 25. Separability Clause.** — If any part or provision of this Act shall be
18 declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions hereof which are not
19 affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

20 **SEC. 26. Effectivity Clause.** — This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15)
21 days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers
22 of general circulation

Approved,