



Legislation Text

File #: Res 2088-2009, **Version:** *

Res. No. 2088

Resolution opposing passage of A.2009-C/S.2165-B, legislation that would legalize mixed martial arts in New York State.

By Council Members Gennaro and James

Whereas, Mixed martial arts (MMA), also known as ultimate fighting and cage fighting, is a form of fighting that combines wrestling, boxing, jujitsu and hand to hand combat and takes place in an octagon ring that is enclosed in a cage; and

Whereas, This sport has been popularized in the United States in recent years by the Ultimate Fighting Championship, which is often shown on pay-per-view; and

Whereas, The first Ultimate Fighting Championship was held in 1993; and

Whereas, The original MMA competitions had no time limits, no weight classes and few rules; and

Whereas, During his efforts to prevent growth of unregulated ultimate fighting, Sen. John McCain referred to it as “human cockfighting;” and

Whereas, Because of its sheer violence and lack of regulation, MMA was banned in New York State in 1997; and

Whereas, Since then, some regulations and changes have been implemented by those governing this sport and many proponents and supporters have called for its legalization in New York; and

Whereas, Despite changes made to rules, MMA is considered overly violent and barbaric by many of its opponents, who cite the extreme punching, head-butting elbowing and kicking allowed; and

Whereas, In an online post dated January 22, 2009, entitled “The Disturbing Rise of Ultimate Fighting,” The New York Times’ editorial writers referred to ultimate fighting, as “blood soaked slugfests;” and

Whereas, In 2008, a bill to legalize MMA was introduced in the New York State legislature with a slightly amended version of the bill introduced in the 2009 session; and

Whereas, This legislation, A.2009-C/S.2165-B, would authorize mixed martial arts events in the State of New York; and

Whereas, The legislation would also amend New York State tax law in relation to imposing a tax on the gross receipts of any person holding professional matching or exhibitions; and

Whereas, A report issued by Assemblyman Bob Reilly of Albany refuted the assumption that such legislation would financially benefit New York State; and

Whereas, The report, entitled “The Case Against Ultimate Fighting in New York State,” claims that the legalization of this sport would not benefit, but would actually harm the local economy, stating that the nature of Ultimate Fighting is transitory and strictly profit driven; and

Whereas, According to a poll conducted by Gramercy Communications, 67% of respondents believe that MMA should not be legal in New York State; and

Whereas, Mixed marital arts is an extremely violent sport which would not add any value to the residents of New York State; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York opposes passage of A.2009-C/S.2165-B, legislation that would legalize mixed martial arts in New York State.

JP
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7/22/09

