

The Honorable Tim Walberg Chairman
Committee of Education and Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert C. "Bobby" Scott Ranking Member
Committee of Education and Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Chairman Walberg and Ranking Member Scott:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Muhammad Ali American Boxing Revival Act.

I've spent two decades as a club boxing promoter in Minnesota working with developing fighters who dream of making it to the national level. As a result, I feel compelled to share the perspective—from someone inside the sport but outside the money. That perspective seems missing from the debate over the Muhammad Ali American Boxing Revival Act.

As a club promoter my job is developing local talent and helping them to become competitive, and, in an ideal world, able to be involved in a nationally televised opportunity when they're ready. A decade ago, that pathway existed through shows like ESPN Friday Night Fights and ShoBox. Those developmental series are gone. Boxing is at a low point right now. I don't think that can be contested. Championship-level boxing has disappeared from network television for the first time in 80 years.

It is disappointing listening to promoters and others benefiting from the current system pretending that our sport isn't completely broken. Public filings revealed Matchroom USA has seen an 80% decrease from the initial rights fee they were getting from DAZN, yet Eddie Hearn will look at a camera and say, "I like where we're at." It is time for a change.

After COVID-19, club boxing in the United States was at a low point not much different from where the championship level is currently. Club promoters adapted to a changing marketplace and rebuilt the sport's grassroots in less than five years, largely without support. We know how to adjust when necessary. The top of the sport has shown no similar willingness to evolve despite having access to unprecedented resources.

This is why I strongly support the Muhammad Ali American Boxing Revival Act and its proposed Unified Boxing Organizations option. A fighter should have the opportunity to compete in a market with the current system as an option, and also with the alternative of signing with a UBO. Adding this system to boxing doesn't require fighters to compete under it. I want boxing's current system to be healthy and for fighters to be able to control their careers if that's what they choose. I also welcome the UBO model for the fighters who want to choose that path.

From what's been reported about the UBO model, I believe it would be beneficial to club boxing fighters and promoters. Why wouldn't we allow a model that could give the majority of boxers participating in a UBO a pay increase, consistent fight dates, better insurance, and adequate preparation time? Why are we hesitant to allow an alternative that could provide opportunities for fighters who otherwise wouldn't have them?

The naysayers have yet to offer anything beyond the status quo and the speculation that new entrants will monopolize the sport. It is counterintuitive that more competition will be bad for boxers. I think the Ali Revival Act will open up a new world of opportunities for the fighters I work with now and in the future and that is why I encourage you to pass the Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CR', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cory Rapacz
Rapacz Boxing, LLC