

Opening Statement of Rep. Ryan Mackenzie (R-PA), Chairman  
Workforce Protections Subcommittee  
“In Their Corner: Creating More Opportunities for American Boxers”  
December 4, 2025

(As prepared for delivery)

Today’s hearing examines the current state of the boxing industry and how H.R. 4624, the *Muhammad Ali American Boxing Revival Act*, can help usher in a new golden age for the sport.

For most of the 20th century, boxing stood at the heart of American sports and culture. It gave us legends like Jack Johnson, Sugar Ray Robinson, Jack Dempsey, and Muhammad Ali. And I should also note, from the Seventh Congressional District in Pennsylvania, Larry Holmes.

We recognize exceptional boxers like world champion Christy Martin, who was elected to the International Boxing Hall of Fame in the first year that women were on the ballot.

We also honor more recent champions like the great English boxer Ricky “The Hitman” Hatton, whose untimely passing reminds us of the lasting bond between fighters and fans across the world.

These boxers were champions in the ring and icons outside of it. Boxing has long been a symbol of grit, determination, and the will to overcome impossible odds—qualities that are at the heart of the American spirit.

But today, we must face a hard truth: boxing is failing to meet the high standards of American sports.

What was once a respected and unified sport has become fragmented—plagued by inconsistent standards, weak enforcement, and a troubling lack of accountability. Too often, fighters are pushed into dangerous matches without proper medical oversight. The result is a system that too frequently exploits its athletes instead of protecting them.

That must change.

Professional boxing needs clear, consistent standards that safeguard fighters' health and restore integrity to the profession. As we learn more about the long-term dangers of CTE and performance-enhancing substances, we should honor fighters' courage with a system that protects their health and safeguards the sport.

That's the purpose of H.R. 4624, the *Muhammad Ali American Boxing Revival Act*. Building on the foundation of the *Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996*, this bipartisan legislation will bring real change to the sport by putting fighters first.

This bill establishes Unified Boxing Organizations (UBOs) to set uniform safety and fairness standards. Under these organizations:

- Boxers would receive regular medical exams and routine MRI screenings, with additional precautions for boxers over 40.

- Medical personnel will be present at every match.
- A strict, transparent anti-doping policy will be enforced.

This bill would set new industry-wide standards for medical insurance coverage and set a floor for per-round pay for boxers. Whether a boxer competes inside or outside a UBO, fair pay and medical protection will no longer be optional—they will be the standard.

This is about rebuilding trust, protecting athletes, and reigniting the passion that once made boxing a cornerstone of American life. More importantly, it is about ensuring the sport doesn't sacrifice the health and dignity of its athletes.

Boxing can be great again. It can inspire, uplift, and unify. H.R. 4624 can help revive a proud tradition while ensuring every fighter, from the first bell to the final round, is treated with dignity and respect.

With that, I yield to the Ranking Member for an opening statement.