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SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 698

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INTRODUCED BY SENATOR VILLAR

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**RESOLUTION**  
**URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON GAMES, AMUSEMENT AND SPORTS**  
**TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ISSUE OF**  
**MEDICAL INSURANCE AND SAFETY OF AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL**  
**FILIPINO BOXERS, INCLUDING MIXED MARTIAL ARTS (MMA) FIGHTERS,**  
**WITH THE END IN VIEW OF CRAFTING APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION THAT**  
**MANDATES COMPULSORY INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR ATHLETES**  
**PARTICIPATING IN COMBAT SPORTS**

*Whereas*, US servicemen introduced boxing to the Philippines during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries;<sup>1</sup>

*Whereas*, boxing in the Philippines, despite being only secondary to basketball in terms of popularity, has produced a number of Olympic standouts, world champions and greatest fighters in the history of the sport;

*Whereas*, Philippine professional boxing has produced 35 major world champions, including those of Filipino heritage;

*Whereas*, we have Pancho Villa, Flash Elorde and Ceferino Garcia as Filipino boxing greats;

*Whereas*, following in the footsteps of these boxing legends are Filipino world champions, Luisito Espinosa, Gerry Penalosa and more recently Nonito Donaire;

*Whereas*, Manny Pacquiao, currently the WBO Welterweight champion, made history by holding the most titles in eight different weight classes, and is deemed the world's best pound-for-pound boxer;

*Whereas*, Z Gorres retired from professional boxing as a result of injuries he sustained on the head during his last fight against Colombian Luis Melendez in 2009;

*Whereas*, super flyweight boxer, Karlo Maquinto, fell into coma and succumbed to death soon after due to massive brain hemorrhage following his fight against Mark Joseph Acosta recently;

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<sup>1</sup> *The Origins of Boxing in the Philippines, 1899-1929* by Joseph R. Svinth

*Whereas*, Mixed Martial Arts (MMA), or Ultimate Fighting, is a full contact combat sport that allows the use of both striking and grappling techniques, both standing and on the ground, including boxing, wrestling, Brazilian jiu-jitsu, muay Thai, kickboxing, taekwondo, karate, judo and other styles;<sup>2</sup>

*Whereas*, MMA is slowly gaining popularity in the Philippines;

*Whereas*, injuries are commonplace in boxing matches and MMA fights;

*Whereas*, such injuries may be as minor as cuts and bruises, or life-threatening as internal bleeding, head trauma or even death;

*Whereas*, these injuries are risks that boxers and MMA fighters decide to take when entering the ring;

*Whereas*, not all insurance companies are willing to cover high-risk sports such as boxing and MMA and the few that do charge substantially higher fees;

*Whereas*, sufficient medical supervision with appropriate competencies, insurance, and preventive measures should be in place to ensure the safety and well-being of athletes that participate in combat sports: Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Senate Committee on Games, Amusement and Sports to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the issue of medical insurance and safety of amateur and professional Filipino boxers, including Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighters, with the end in view of crafting appropriate legislation that mandates compulsory insurance coverage for athletes participating in combat sports.

Adopted,

  
MANNY VILLAR  
Senator

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<sup>2</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mixed\\_martial\\_arts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mixed_martial_arts)