

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R8276 PRL-F

S.B. 842
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Ringside physicians are licensed medical professionals who play a vital role in ensuring the safety of participants in combative sports events. Every combative sports event licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation is required to have an assigned ringside physician, whose duties include both preventive and immediate response care under intense pressure.

With the growth in popularity of combative sports in Texas, the need for more physicians to work these events has grown. Stakeholders contend the demand for combative sporting events has outpaced the ability to find and recruit physicians. Recent reports show that physicians are reluctant to sign up to work these events due to the lack of protection from liability.

S.B. 842 clarifies that a ringside physician is immune from civil liability arising from actions performed within their scope of practice at a combative sports event. By safeguarding physicians from legal repercussions, this bill helps to ensure that physicians can continue to make rapid decisions in high pressure circumstances to prioritize and protect the safety of fighters.

As proposed, S.B. 842 amends current law relating to immunity for ringside physicians assigned to combative sports events.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter F, Chapter 2052, Occupations Code, by adding Section 2052.255, as follows:

Sec. 2052.255. IMMUNITY FOR RINGSIDE PHYSICIANS. (a) Provides that a ringside physician, except as otherwise provided by this section, is immune from civil liability arising from acts within the scope of the physician's responsibilities at a combative sports event.

(b) Provides that the immunity from civil liability provided by Subsection (a) does not apply to a cause of action arising from an act or omission constituting gross negligence of the physician.

SECTION 2. Makes application of Section 2052.255, Occupation Code, as added by this Act, prospective.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.