

**CONGRESS AND BOXING:
A Legislative History, 1960–2003**

Volume 1

Document Numbers 1–2

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William S. Hein & Co., Inc.
Buffalo, New York
2005

**HEIN'S SPORTS LAW
LEGISLATIVE HISTORY SERIES**

Baseball and Antitrust: The Legislative History of the Curt
Flood Act of 1998.

Congress and Boxing: A Legislative History, 1960–2003.

ISBN 0-8377-3445-2 (set)

Introduction and selection and arrangement of materials
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Printed in the United States of America

The quality of this reprint is equivalent to the
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This volume is printed on acid-free paper
by William S. Hein & Co., Inc.

CONGRESS FINALLY LANDS A ONE-TWO COMBINATION: A LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF THE PROFESSIONAL BOXING SAFETY ACT OF 1996 AND THE MUHAMMAD ALI BOXING REFORM ACT

Ed Edmonds*

On October 9, 1996, President Bill Clinton signed the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996,¹ signaling the end of more than forty years of congressional fascination with the controversial sport of professional boxing without the enactment of legislation. Starting with a series of hearings before Estes Kefauver's antitrust subcommittee in 1960, Congress regularly considered legislation requiring federal intervention into some aspect of boxing. After thirty-five years of consideration, Congress finally passed an act "to improve and expand the system of safety precautions that protects the welfare of professional boxers; and ... to assist State boxing commissioners to provide proper oversight for the professional boxing industry in the United States."² Less than four years later, Congress would amend the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 in an act³ honoring arguably the greatest name in United States boxing history, Muhammad Ali.

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¹Pub. L. No. 104-272, 110 Stat. 3309 (1996) (codified as amended at 15 U.S.C. §§ 6301-6313 (2000)). See also Joseph Skrec, *Don't Count Out Jersey Fighter; Maciunski Full of Surprises*, RECORD (Northern New Jersey), Dec. 1, 1996, at S19, available at 1996 WL 6120913.

²15 U.S.C. § 6301 (2000).

³Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act, Pub. L. No. 106-210, 114 Stat. 321 (1999) (codified at 15 U.S.C. §§ 6301, 6303, 6305, 6306, 6307 a-h, 6308, 6309, 6313 (2000)).

