



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

## UFC Applauds Senate Committee for Approving MMA Bill

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO February 14, 2012

| ISSUE: **RECREATION AND TOURISM**

### **UFC Applauds Senate Committee for Approving MMA Bill Early Reporting of Bill Will Help Bring Issue to the Fore**

ALBANY, NY– The Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) today applauded the Senate’s Committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks and Recreation for approving S.1707A, which would authorize the New York State Athletic Commission to add Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) to the list of contact sports that may hold matches and exhibitions in New York, and sending the bill to the Committee on Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business for consideration.

“New York is one of only three states that does not allow professional MMA events to take place within its borders,” UFC Chairman & CEO Lorenzo Fertitta said. “It’s unfair to the millions of UFC fans in New York who want to see matches in person without having to travel out of state, and we hope this is the first step in legalizing MMA in New York in 2012. Mixed Martial Arts is the fastest growing sport in history – both in fans and in participants. There are literally hundreds of MMA schools and training facilities in New York, and the UFC has contributed to economic development and job creation in scores of communities around the country and across the world.”

“We want to bring the UFC to New York and to our loyal fans here, and we will do so immediately if this bill is passed and signed into law,” Fertitta added. “In fact, the UFC announced this very week that the UFC light heavyweight title bout between two New Yorkers – champion Jon Jones of Rochester and challenger Rashad Evans of Niagara Falls – will be held in Atlanta in April. It is a shame that such a huge event, which will attract fan and media attention around the world, between two New Yorkers cannot be held in their home state. The UFC remains committed, however, to bringing world class events to New York, and specifically Western New York, as soon as we are able to do so.”

S.1707-A is sponsored by Senator Joseph Griffo (R,C, IP - Rome), along with nine cosponsors – Republicans and Democrats. The bill passed the Senate in 2011 by a vote of 42-18.

“I want to thank Senator Betty Little and my colleagues on the committee for their swift action on moving this bill,” Sen. Griffo said. “This is not a bill that pits Republicans vs. Democrats. To the contrary, we have broad bipartisan support for this legislation and I know that we will once again pass it overwhelmingly in the Senate. And I believe we will do so early enough in the session to provide ample opportunity for the other House to consider it and to pass it.

“While I respect those who do not support this legislation, I must humbly say that they are misguided. This legislation will spur economic development in communities across the state, create jobs and produce new revenue for the state and for local governments where MMA events are held. And it will give the millions of MMA followers the ability to see this exciting sport in person and not just on television,” Sen. Griffo said.