



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Liz Krueger

## My Opposition to the Legalization of Ultimate Fighting

LIZ KRUEGER June 16, 2010

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Today, I stood in opposition to legislation which would allow professional mixed martial arts, or Ultimate Fighting, to be permitted in the State of New York. I voted against this bill (S2165), which was supported by the majority of my conference, due to my concern over the escalating violence in this sport and disturbing trend of severe head injury to participants of the sport.

There is no way of ignoring the fact that this is a sport rooted in violence. By glamorizing and legalizing this activity in New York we are exposing our children to a heightened level of brutality which can inadvertently encourage dangerous behavior in children.

Mixed martial arts, which combines boxing, wrestling and jujitsu, allows a competitor to strike his opponent even when the latter has been knocked to the ground. The sport was originally deemed too dangerous 13 years ago, when it was banned in New York State. Since then it has grown in popularity, exposing a troubling contradiction to the efforts made by other physical sports to raise awareness on the dangers of concussions.

Medical experts agree that participation in Ultimate Fighting can lead to permanent brain damage and even premature death. How can we legalize a sport which has shown time and again to have tragic consequence for its participants? Because promoters and even the State

can make money off of it? I'm sorry, but no price will make up for the damage this will do to the New Yorkers who partake in this sport.

-Liz