

MADISON - Legislation that would extend mixed martial arts regulations to the sport of and other unarmed combat sports is on its way to becoming law after passing the State Senate on a voice vote Tuesday.

The legislation was introduced by Democratic Senator **Dave Hansen** and Republicans Representative **Joel Kleefisch** and Senator **Rob Cowles** in response to the death of Dennis Munson Jr. who lost his life in his first kickboxing competition.



“This is an important step toward extending the lifesaving protections found in mixed martial arts law to competitors in kickboxing,” **said Hansen**, a co-author of the bill. “We cannot go back in time and save Dennis Munson Jr., but thanks to the efforts of his family and the bi-partisan support here in the Legislature, we are doing all we can to make sure that no other families will have to endure a tragic loss like Dennis Munson’s family has had to bear.”

An Assembly version of the bill, Assembly Bill 76, passed the State Assembly on February 9th, but the Department of Safety and Professional Services said it needed more time to implement the new law. Because the Assembly is set to conclude its business on Thursday the Senate needed to act quickly to pass an amended version of the Senate bill in time for the Assembly to pass it on Thursday.

“In 2009 we took a major step in protecting mixed martial arts fighters. Unfortunately, as we learned, Dennis Munson Jr. did not enjoy those protections when he lost his life in an unregulated kickboxing match," said Hansen. "With today’s vote in the State Senate and Thursday’s action in the Assembly, we are poised to honor Dennis by extending those protections to all competitors in unarmed combat sports.”

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Legislative writer Jay Wadd contributed to this story.