

Date of Hearing: April 16, 2026

Fiscal: Yes

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON PRIVACY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

Rebecca Bauer-Kahan, Chair

AB 1720 (Haney) – As Amended April 14, 2026

SUBJECT: Ticket sellers

SYNOPSIS

Music artists, independent concert venue operators, and Ticketmaster do not agree on much, but they agree that the resale of entertainment tickets at greatly inflated prices is harming both artists and their fans. The Future of Music Coalition characterizes the state of affairs this way:

[T]oo often, policy debates have been framed as a false choice, with Live Nation on one side and the predatory resale industry on the other side, each pointing fingers at each other as solely responsible for the problems in live event ticketing. The journalist Andy Cush has described this as a Godzilla vs King Kong battle. He points out “Just because the two monsters are fighting doesn’t mean one of them is the good guy.”

As a long overdue anti-trust lawsuit against Ticketmaster concludes at the federal level, this bill seeks to complement that effort. It addresses problems in the secondary market by capping the price that someone can resell a ticket for at 110 percent of the price they paid for it when they originally purchased it.

As examined in detail in Comment # 6, the opposition, primarily secondary marketplace platforms, ticket brokers, and organizations that are aligned with them, have three primary arguments. They argue that price caps will bolster the Live Nation monopoly, increase fraud in the resale market, and that the bill is unworkable.

Over the last few years of examining the live entertainment ticket market, including an in-depth informational hearing in 2024, and hearing from a wide range of experts, this Committee has come to several conclusions:

- 1. The live entertainment ecosystem is made up of two distinct markets.*
- 2. There are problems in both markets that negatively impact consumers.*
- 3. The current on-going efforts to break up Live Nation are separate from reforming the secondary market and both can co-exist.*
- 4. In countries that have restricted the resale market, including placing price caps on the price of resale tickets, the price of tickets is significantly lower than in the United States, including in countries where Ticketmaster has a large share of the market.*

This is one of three Assembly bills being heard by this Committee related to protecting consumers from predatory resale practices. This bill establishes a ten percent cap on how much live entertainment ticket resellers can charge in the secondary ticket market; the second one prohibits the unauthorized resale of restaurant reservations;¹ and the third prohibits the

¹ AB 1640 (Stefani)

unauthorized resale of tee time reservations at municipal golf courses.² All three bills seek to discourage people who are competing with actual customers by buying tickets, tee-times, and dinner reservations with the intention of reselling them back to the customers at an inflated price.

This bill is sponsored by the National Independent Talent Organization and is supported by a broad range of organizations representing artists and venues. The opposition includes secondary market platforms, ticket brokers, and a variety of community business organizations, including the Latino Chamber of Commerce and the California Multicultural Business Alliance.

This bill is triple referred. It was first heard by the Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism Committee where it passed on a 6 to 1 vote. If passed by this Committee, this bill will next be referred to the Judiciary Committee.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the Better Online Ticket Sales (BOTS) Act, which prohibits the use of automated bots to circumvent ticket purchase limits set by ticket sellers. (15 U.S.C. § 45c.)
- 2) Prohibits selling or offering to sell an event ticket obtained using an automated bot if the seller participated in, had the ability to control, or should have known about the violation. (15 U.S.C. § 45c.)
- 3) Prohibits any person who does not have the written permission of the owner or operator of the property on which an entertainment event is to be held or is being held, from selling tickets to the entertainment event, which were obtained for the purpose of resale, at any price which is in excess of the price that is printed or endorsed upon the ticket, while on the grounds of or in the stadium, arena, theater, or other place where an event for which admission tickets are sold is to be held or is being held. A violation of this law constitutes a misdemeanor. (Pen. Code § 346.)
- 4) Declares it unlawful for a person to intentionally use or sell software or services to circumvent a security measure, access control system, or other control or measure (including limits on the number of tickets a person can purchase) that is used to ensure an equitable ticket buying process for event attendees. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22502.5.)
- 5) Defines a “ticket seller” as any person who for compensation, commission, or otherwise sells admission tickets to sporting, musical, theatre, or any other entertainment event. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22503.)
- 6) Clarifies that the following are not ticket sellers for purposes of existing law:
 - a. An officially appointed agent of an air carrier, ocean carrier, or motor coach carrier who purchases or sells tickets in conjunction with a tour package.
 - b. Any person who sells six tickets or less to any one single event, provided the tickets are sold off the event premises, including, but not limited to, designated parking areas and points of entry to the event.

² AB 1954 (Ward)

- c. The person or organization responsible for the event for which tickets are being sold, or a seller of tickets operating under a written contract with this person or organization.
 - d. Any nonprofit charitable tax-exempt organization selling tickets to an event sponsored by the organization. (Bus. & Prof. Code §§ 22503.5, 22503.6, 22504, 22511.)
- 7) Requires a ticket seller to have a permanent business address from which tickets may only be sold and that the address be included in any advertisement or solicitation. Makes a violation of this requirement a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment or a fine not exceeding \$2,500 or by both and provides for civil penalties of up to \$2,500 for violations. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22500.)
- 8) Requires ticket sellers:
- a. Maintain records of ticket sales, deposits, and refunds. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22501.)
 - b. Prior to sale, disclose to the purchaser by means of description or a map the location of the seat or seats represented by the ticket or tickets. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22502.)
 - c. Make any partial or full deposit refundable if received on a future event for which tickets are not available, except for a service charge of not more than 10 percent, until such time as tickets for the event are actually available. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22506.)
 - d. Provide a refund within 30 days for the ticket price of an event that is canceled. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22507(a).)
 - e. Provide a refund, upon request, within 30 days, for the ticket price of an event which is postponed, rescheduled, or replaced with another event at the same date and time. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22507(b).)
 - f. Provide that a local jurisdiction may require a bond of not more than \$50,000 to cover required refunds. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22507(d).)
 - g. Disclose that a service charge is imposed by the ticket seller and is added to the actual ticket price by the seller in any advertisement or promotion for any event by the ticket seller. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22508.)
- 9) Prohibits a ticket seller from contracting to sell or accepting payment for tickets unless the ticket seller:
- a. Has lawful possession of the ticket;
 - b. Has a contractual right to obtain the ticket; or
 - c. Informs the purchaser, in a specified manner, that it does not have possession of the ticket, has no contract to obtain the offered ticket, and may not be able to supply the ticket at the contracted price. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22502.1.)

10) Deems a violation of the chapter of the Business and Professions Code containing the provisions related to ticket sellers to be a misdemeanor. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22505.)

THIS BILL:

- 1) Prohibits a ticket reseller from selling a ticket for more than 110 percent of that ticket's initial sale price.
- 2) States that if a ticket has been resold or transferred more than once, regardless of the purchase price in the resale market, the maximum resale price remains no more than ten percent above the original purchase price.
- 3) Prohibits the ticket reseller from charging more than ten percent of the original ticket price as an administrative fee.
- 4) Prohibits a resale ticket marketplace from charging more than ten percent of the original face value of the ticket in additional fees to the seller or the buyer of the ticket.
- 5) Requires an original seller to print or display on a ticket the original purchase price of that ticket.
- 6) Places the obligation on the secondary marketplace platform to require that the reseller disclose the original price of the ticket on the platform listing.
- 7) Exempts professional sports teams, international sporting events, and certain amateur and collegiate teams from the provisions of this bill.
- 8) Defines the following:
 - a. "Collegiate or amateur championship sporting event" includes, but is not limited to, postseason tournaments or neutral-site competitions conducted by the National Collegiate Athletic Association, conference championships, bowl games, or similar nationally sanctioned collegiate athletic competitions.
 - b. "Original seller," as used in this section, means a person who, for compensation, commission, or otherwise, advertises, lists, markets for sale, or sells an admission ticket to a sporting, musical, theatre, or other entertainment event for original sale as instructed by an event presenter, event organizer, rights holder, or venue operator.
 - c. "Professional sporting event" means a sporting event conducted by, or under contract with, a professional sports team or professional sports league in which participating athletes receive compensation for participation in the event.
 - d. "Resale" means any resale of a ticket other than a sale conducted by the primary contractor or its authorized ticket agent.
 - e. "Rights holder" means an artist, performing arts organization, theater or dance company, professional athletic team, professional athletic league, author, lecturer, or any other persons who are the primary speakers or performers at an event for which tickets are sold.

- f. “Season ticketholder” or “season ticket licenseholder” means a person or entity that purchases or holds a contractual right to purchase a package of tickets directly from a professional sports team, league, or their authorized ticket agent for multiple games or events during a defined season.
- g. “Ticket resale marketplace” means an entity that, for compensation, commission, or otherwise, advertises, lists, markets for sale, processes payments for, facilitates the resale of, or resells an admission ticket for, a sporting, musical, theater, or other live entertainment event.
- h. “Ticket reseller” means a person who for compensation, commission, or otherwise, advertises, lists, markets for sale, or sells an admission ticket to a sporting, musical, theater, or other entertainment event other than a ticket for original sale sold by an original seller.

COMMENTS:

1) **Author’s statement.** According to the author:

For decades, concert tickets were sold at face value to real fans who wanted to see the artists they loved. But today, professional scalpers and bots buy up tickets in seconds and resell them at massive markups. This bill puts an end to that system and puts the concert experience back where it belongs: with fans and artists.

Concert tickets aren’t stocks to be flipped for profit. They’re a chance for real fans to see the artists they love. Yet for years we’ve let out-of-state scalpers and speculators cut the line, buy up tickets in bulk, and resell them at outrageous markups, shutting out fans while taking the lion’s share of the money. They didn’t write the songs. They didn’t build the venues. They didn’t clean the bathrooms. They didn’t put on the show. But they’re the ones cashing in. That’s not fair, and it’s not inevitable. California is the heart of the music industry, and we have a duty to stand with fans, artists, and venues, not speculators and scalpers. This is about restoring common sense and making sure live music is about community and culture, not price-gouging and profiteering.

2) **The ticket buying marketplace.** Generally, there are two distinctly different online marketplaces where tickets are bought and sold, the primary and the secondary markets:

The primary market. The primary market is one in which event organizers control the ticket price, the sharing of the revenue between the artist, venue operator, and ticket company, and which platform will sell the tickets. The prices set in the primary market heavily affect the volume and value of tickets in the secondary market. In general, it is most common to find underpriced tickets—tickets that sell on the primary market with a face value that is below their market value—so that event organizers can maximize the attendance of their target audience in order to increase customer loyalty, and merchandise sales.³ To complicate ticket selling in the primary market, some artists have been known to hold back a certain number of tickets to sell on

³ *The Event Ticketing Industry is Broken and in Need of Disruption*, Aventus Network (May 19, 2017).

the resale market in order to take advantage of the higher prices while still maintaining fan loyalty by offering the initial tickets at a low price.⁴

The secondary market. The secondary market is where tickets purchased on the primary market are resold. Ticket prices are usually significantly higher when purchased from someone in the secondary market. A study conducted by the National Independent Talent Organizations (NITO) analyzed data from 65 different shows around the country in 2023 where artists represented by NITO members performed. According to their findings, on average, ticket buyers were charged twice as much when buying tickets in the secondary market.⁵ Secondary market platforms not only serve as a way for professional ticket brokers (i.e. businesses that purchase event tickets solely for the purpose of reselling them for a profit) to sell tickets, they also play an important role by allowing consumers who can no longer use their tickets a relatively simple way of recouping their money and perhaps making a profit by reselling them to someone else.

The platforms, for a fee, simply provide the infrastructure and technology that make up the marketplace for brokers and individuals to resell their tickets. Professional ticket brokers either enter into agreements with sports teams and promoters to have access to tickets for resale or they compete with consumers in the primary marketplace to purchase tickets that they intend to resell at a profit on the platforms. These secondary market platforms, such as StubHub, Vivid Seats, TickPicks, SeatGeek, and the secondary platforms run by Ticketmaster and their main competitor AXS, generally speaking, are similar to eBay (the former parent company for StubHub) or Etsy.

Largely invisible in the world of ticketing are the ticket brokers themselves. The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), found in their research that it is ticket brokers, offering large numbers of tickets at inflated prices, who are dominating the resale marketplaces. According to their 2018 report:

Brokers whose business is to purchase and resell tickets have a competitive advantage over individual consumers because they have the technology and resources to purchase large numbers of tickets as soon as they go on sale. Some consumer advocates, state officials, and event organizers believe that brokers unfairly use this advantage to obtain tickets from the primary market, which restricts ordinary consumers from buying tickets at face value. As a result, consumers may pay higher prices than they would if tickets were available on the primary market. In addition, some event organizers and primary ticket sellers have expressed frustration that the profits from the higher resale price accrue to brokers who have not played a role in creating or producing the event.⁶

3) Consumer challenges. One widespread complaint from consumers trying to purchase tickets to popular shows or sporting events is that they are poised on their web browsers to buy tickets the moment they go on sale, but the available tickets are sold out within seconds or minutes of the initial sale. So, consumers are unable to buy them, no matter how quickly they move the

⁴ Tyler Jenke, "Ed Sheeran's manager has admitted to selling tickets to resale services," *The Music Network* (Jun 3, 2018) available at <https://themusicnetwork.com/ed-sheeran-manager-sold-tickets-resale/>.

⁵ *NITO Ticket Resale Study*. National Independent Talent Organization (Jul 2023)

⁶ GAO, *Event Ticket Sales: Market Characteristics and Consumer Protection Issues*, GAO-18-347 (May 14, 2023) available at <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-18-347>.

moment the tickets are available. Adding to their frustration is the fact that, almost immediately, they find tickets that they were unable to purchase at the on-sale site being advertised for sale on other websites, for much higher prices.

Because of the deployment of a variety of technologies (termed “bots”) used by people operating in the resale market to immediately purchase tickets the moment they go on sale, consumers will always be at a disadvantage when it comes to the most popular artists and sporting events. Despite federal and state laws prohibiting the use of this technology, the problem persists. In addition, as the technology becomes more sophisticated, it becomes harder for primary ticket sellers to detect and block. Cybersecurity firm, Imperva, studies what it has termed “bad bots,” which are “software applications that run automated tasks with malicious intent.” In its 2023 report, Imperva found that bad bots make up 30 percent of all automated internet traffic and that bots generally made up 47.7% of all internet traffic in 2022.⁷ In their 2025 report they found that for the first time in a decade bots made up for 51 percent of all internet activity and bad bots made up 37% of internet activity.⁸

In addition, for consumers who are not familiar with the fact that both primary and secondary markets exist, they often can find themselves on a secondary site and pay more than they otherwise would have if they had sought out the primary ticket seller. This problem exists whether it is a major arena show by a well-known artist or a small local club. Below are two examples⁹ of the ticket prices being sold by two California clubs, one in Sacramento and one in San Diego. In the first example, Harlow’s, a 350-capacity general admission club in Sacramento, is selling tickets to an upcoming show for a total price of \$32.90, including any fees and taxes.

Harlow's presents
Ryan Caraveo: The Forever Foggy Tour, with Travis Thompson
 Harlow's
 April 24, 2026 8:00 PM
 Doors Open: 7:00 PM
 This Event is All Ages
 Listed ticket price is inclusive of all online fees.
 All sales are final. please review before purchasing. No Refunds.
 CONTINUE SHOPPING

This venue uses All-In Pricing. The total price listed includes ticket fees and taxes.

Number of Tickets: 0 (Limit 6 tickets per order)
 Standing Room - Advance: \$32.90

⁷ Imperva 2023 Bad Bot Report available at <https://www.imperva.com/resources/resource-library/reports/2023-imperva-bad-bot-report/>.

⁸ Imperva 2025 Bad Bot Report available at <https://www.imperva.com/blog/2025-imperva-bad-bot-report-how-ai-is-supercharging-the-bot-threat/>.

⁹ Examples were provided by the sponsors of the bill, the National Independent Venue Association. Both club owners are members of NIVA and do not use Ticketmaster as their primary ticket seller.

The following illustrates the advertised ticket prices for the same show at Harlow's on the secondary market. The lowest price is almost double the price of the ticket being sold by Harlow's at \$61 each and the highest price for a ticket is over \$4,062. Presumably, a consumer would not purchase a general admission ticket for \$4,000 or even \$200 when they could purchase on for the "amazing" low price of \$61 (\$28 over the actual price of the ticket).

STUBHUB LISTINGS

The image displays two screenshots of the StubHub app interface for a Ryan Caraveo concert at Harlow's on Friday, April 24, 2026, at 8:00 PM. The venue is Harlow's - Complex, 2708 J Street, Sacramento, Ca.

Left Screenshot: Shows a single listing for "GENERAL ADMISSION" at \$61, labeled "Amazing". Below it is another listing for "GENERAL ADMISSION" at \$200, labeled "Great".

Right Screenshot: Shows a list of 12 listings sorted by price. The listings are as follows:

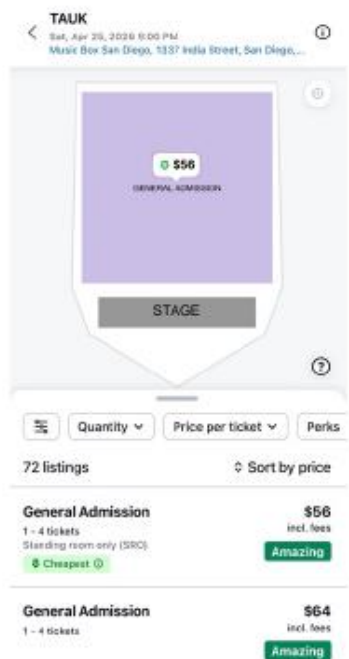
Category	Quantity	Price per ticket	Incl. fees	Label
General Admission	1 - 4 tickets	\$200	incl. fees	Great
General Admission	1 - 4 tickets	\$200	incl. fees	Great
General Admission	2 tickets	\$700	incl. fees	
General Admission	2 tickets	\$700	incl. fees	
General Admission	1 - 4 tickets	\$700	incl. fees	
General Admission	1 ticket	\$2,902	incl. fees	
General Admission	1 - 4 tickets	\$3,621	incl. fees	
General Admission	1 - 8 tickets	\$4,062	incl. fees	

The second example, below, shows a general admission ticket for Tauk at The Music Box, a 700-capacity general admission venue in San Diego. The price of the ticket at the venue's box office are \$31.66 including fees and taxes.

The image shows a screenshot of the Music Box app interface. At the top, there is a photo of the band Tauk. Below the photo, the venue information is displayed: "Music Box, 1337 India Street, San Diego, CA 92101". There are buttons for "Venue Info" and "Open in maps", and a "Share Event" link.

On the right side, there is an "Access Code" field with a "Submit" button. Below that, the "Tickets" section shows "General Admission Standing" for \$25, with a note "(+\$6.66 fees)". The total price is displayed as \$31.66. There are minus and plus buttons next to the total price, and a note "ORDER LIMITED TO 8 TICKETS".

Below are the prices of the tickets being sold on a secondary platform. The “amazing” low price is \$56 including fees (almost \$25 more than the actual price of the ticket). The highest price per ticket is listed at \$576 per ticket.



Since both clubs in the examples are general admission clubs without reserved seating, there is no actual difference between the ticket available from the box office and those listed on the secondary market. The only difference is that someone in the business of reselling tickets purchased those tickets before the consumer could, limiting the consumer’s ability to purchase the tickets at their face value.

Of course, the difference in prices can be much more extreme when it comes to a popular artist. The author notes:

Professional scalpers often purchase large numbers of tickets the moment they go on sale and immediately upload them to secondary resale websites at steep markups. These markups have skyrocketed in recent years. The average secondary market price for tickets to the North American leg of Taylor Swift’s Eras Tour was approximately \$3,801 per ticket, compared to an average face value of \$253.56. Similarly, tickets for major tours by Beyoncé and Harry Styles averaged \$1,096 and \$1,061 on secondary markets.

Recent studies show that fans pay an average of 203% over face value when purchasing tickets on resale platforms. In many cases, artists who intentionally keep ticket prices low to make their shows accessible still see their tickets flipped for massive profits. For example, Luke Combs intentionally priced his tickets modestly at \$72.16, yet 7,767 tickets were resold on the secondary market for more than \$2.3 million, with an average resale price of \$298.52 – a 313% markup

4) How is the ticket buying experience different in other countries? According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the face value of the tickets for Taylor Swift’s concert at SoFi Stadium in 2023

ranged from \$49 to \$449. However, tickets on StubHub were quickly being sold for around \$800 up to \$11,000.¹⁰

At the time *Billboard* reported:

Prices to see [Taylor] Swift at one of her final nine shows in the United States have increased following the release of the album April 19, with the average get-in-the-door price — the lowest price available — hovering around \$2,600 per ticket, according to data from TicketIQ. That means it would cost a couple more than \$5,000 just to be in the same building as Swift in Miami . . . , New Orleans . . . and Indianapolis . . . this fall.

In Europe, however . . . tickets cost only a fraction of that. Right now, the get-in-the door price to see the opening of the European leg of the Eras Tour is \$340 a ticket — 87% cheaper than the average price in the United States. . . . That means a fan in Miami could fly to Paris for about \$900 a person . . . spend two nights at a four-star hotel at \$250 a night and purchase a \$340 concert ticket for a grand total of \$1,740 — which is still \$760 less than the cheapest tickets currently available for her Miami shows.

Tickets to see Swift in Stockholm . . . are even cheaper, at \$312 for the cheapest tickets, while tickets for her show in Portugal . . . start at \$336 and in Spain . . . start at \$324.¹¹

Opponents of reforms in the resale market have argued that one of the reasons that Swift tickets remained so much lower in Europe was because Ticketmaster did not have the same control over the market. However, as noted above, the face value price of Taylor Swift tickets during the United States leg of her tour, particularly here in California, were in a similar range as those in Europe. So, it is unclear what impact their domination in the primary market played in this case.

The opposition has also posited that another reason for the difference in ticket prices is that Swift is not as popular in Europe, so the demand was not as great. However, Swift fans at her sold-out concerts in Edinburgh, Scotland may beg to differ. According to reports from the British Geological Survey, Swift’s fans caused an actual earthquake during her concerts. Seismic readings were detected almost four miles away from the stadium.¹²

While this bill, and previous bills attempting to reform California’s ticketing ecosystem, are not about or for Ms. Swift, but her popularity, the interest of the media, and the loud voices and devotion of her fans around the world provide a clear illustration of the problems with ticket prices in the United States’ entertainment market and allows us to compare the U.S. with markets in other countries.

European countries continue to distrust “touts.” Despite the fact that ticket brokers and other secondary resellers are directly competing with consumers in the primary market and could be

¹⁰ Fox, Emma. “\$11,000 to see Taylor Swift? How concert tickets got so expensive,” *The Los Angeles Times* (July 27, 2023) <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2023-07-27/explaining-the-complicated-world-of-ticketing>.

¹¹ Brooks, Dave. “Why Are Taylor Swift Eras Tour Tickets So Much Cheaper in Europe?” *Billboard* (May 2, 2024) <https://www.billboard.com/business/touring/taylor-swift-eras-tour-tickets-cheaper-europe-1235671760/>.

¹² Melnick, Kyle. “Swifties set off earthquake sensors again. These songs made the biggest stir.” *The Washington Post* (Jun. 13, 2024) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/2024/06/13/taylor-swift-concert-fans-dance-earthquake-sensors/>.

the reason they cannot find tickets, people in the United States have embraced the resale ticket market as a valid business model that provides consumers with the ability to purchase tickets to events that they could not otherwise attend, albeit at a premium price. This is not the case in many European countries where consumers, policymakers, and mainstream media have remained wary of the practice of purchasing tickets to resell them at an inflated price, which the U.K. refers to as “touting.”

Ticket market experts point to this general distrust as one of the reasons for the difference in ticket prices between the United States and Europe, while the United States has turned its attention to the domination of Live Nation Entertainment, the parent company for Ticketmaster, as the main driver behind skyrocketing ticket prices.¹³ Policymakers in other countries have taken concerns related to the price of tickets and the resale market so seriously that one of the planks that the Labour party in Britain ran on for the 2024 election was a commitment to cap the price of resale tickets.

5) The elephant in the room: The Live Nation anti-trust lawsuit. The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) and 30 state and district attorneys general filed an anti-trust lawsuit against Live Nation Entertainment on May 23, 2024. In the suit, the US government asked the courts to break up Live Nation, or at the very least separate Ticketmaster from the conglomerate. The US DOJ accused Live Nation of leveraging its power in the entertainment industry to dominate the industry by locking venues into exclusive ticketing contracts, pressuring artists to use its services, and threatening its rivals with financial retribution. Ultimately a total of 40 States Attorneys General signed onto the lawsuit.

According to California Attorney General Rob Bonta’s office at the time:

The lawsuit alleges Live Nation violated Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Anti-trust Act, which prohibits anticompetitive agreements, monopolization, and attempted monopolization. Monopolization offenses occur when a single firm maintains a monopoly unlawfully, by using its control of the market to exclude rivals and harm competition. In addition, the complaint alleges violation of California’s Unfair Competition Law.

The complaint filed today alleges that Live Nation protects its monopoly by using both exclusive contracts with promoters and venues to protect its dominant position in the live music industry to force artists and venues to use both its ticketing and concert promotion services. Live Nation uses their market dominance to leverage its power over all other aspects of the live music entertainment industry: from artist management, to ticketing, and promotions. For example, Live Nation has used their dominance in promotions to force venues to use Ticketmaster’s ticketing services, thereby blocking innovation and unfairly competing with competitors in the music concert business.

In the lawsuit, Attorney General Bonta, U.S. DOJ, and coalition states allege that Live Nation has:

- *Harmed fans through higher fees.* Fans’ ticketing experience — from buying a ticket to showtime — is also worse than it would be if the industry was competitive.

¹³ While Ticketmaster’s domination is a legitimate concern, as discussed earlier in this analysis, the available data does not support the fact that primary market prices account for the high price of tickets.

- *Maintained its monopoly in ticketing markets* by locking up venues through restrictive long-term, exclusive agreements and threats that venues will lose access to Live Nation-controlled tours and artists if they sign with a rival ticketer.
- *Leveraged its extensive network of venues* to force artists to select Live Nation as a promoter instead of its rivals, maintaining its promotions monopoly.¹⁴

In March 2026, the US Department of Justice announced a settlement with Live Nation. The settlement included the payment of \$280 million in civil penalties to the participating states. In addition, limits were placed on long-term exclusivity contracts with venues, requiring them to be a maximum of four years. In addition, the settlement required a 50-50 split on exclusivity agreements where venues and artists can be exclusive with Live Nation for up to 50 percent of their ticket sales. The other 50 percent of the tickets will be reserved for other ticket sellers to sell. Live nation is also required to divest from 13 amphitheaters around the country. Ticketmaster is also required to open its technology to allow other ticket sellers to use its platform to reach customers.¹⁵

Shortly after the announcement, Attorney General Bonta and 34 other state attorneys general rejected the settlement offer.¹⁶ In announcing the decision AG Bonta stated:

“Today, U.S. DOJ has chosen to settle with Live Nation, but a bipartisan group of attorneys general, including California, have chosen to continue this fight and get a better deal for consumers — the deal Americans nationwide deserve,” said Attorney General Bonta. “Just in the first week of trial, we’ve already heard that Live Nation fully intended to take advantage of fans — and were able to do so because fans had no other place to go. Live Nation has manipulated the market, made itself untouchable by any competitor, and raked in the cash — not because it is better, but because it has acted illegally and created a monopoly.”¹⁷

The states argue that the \$280 million is too small a settlement and that the settlement failed to break up Live Nation’s monopoly. The case is currently wrapping up closing arguments before the jury begins deliberations.¹⁸

6) Concerns raised by the opposition. The opposition presents three primary arguments: (1) price caps in the secondary market will increase Live Nation/Ticketmaster’s monopoly and it will harm current anti-trust efforts; (2) price caps will increase fraud by driving ticket sales

¹⁴ California Department of Justice. *Attorney General Bonta Files Lawsuit Against Live Nation, Ticketmaster* (May 23, 2024) <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-files-lawsuit-against-live-nation-ticketmaster>.

¹⁵ Mary Cunningham, Sarah N. Lynch, Jennifer Jacobs. “Live Nation to open Ticketmaster to other sellers and pay \$280 million to settle anti-trust charges,” *CBS News* (Mar. 9, 2026). <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/live-nation-ticket-master-doj-case-anti-trust/>.

¹⁶ Jon Blistein, “‘Monopolistic Bully’ or ‘Fierce Competitor’? Live Nation Trial Ends With Closing Arguments,” *Rolling Stone* (Apr. 9, 2026)

¹⁷ *Press Release: Attorney General Bonta and State Attorneys General Carry on the Fight Against Live Nation/Ticketmaster* (Mar. 9, 2026) <https://oag.ca.gov/news/press-releases/attorney-general-bonta-and-state-attorneys-general-carry-fight-against-live>.

¹⁸ Jon Blistein (Apr. 9, 2026).

underground; and, (3) the bill is unworkable because the secondary marketplaces have no way of knowing what the original price of the ticket was. Each argument is addressed below.

Will price caps entrench the monopoly? The Consumer Federation of California writes:

The Live Nation/Ticketmaster monopoly is a massive vertically integrated monopoly. It directly represents hundreds of the largest artists in entertainment. It owns a dominant number of outdoor amphitheaters important to the live music infrastructure. It has a dominant position in terms of promoting and putting together artist tours. It forces venues of many sizes, particularly mid-sized and smaller venues, to sign long-term exclusive ticketing agreements with the monopoly, and greases these transactions with additional payments (sometimes called kickbacks by critics of the monopoly). It dominates the primary ticketing market, with a roughly 80% market share – clearly monopoly sized. It also is the largest player in the secondary ticketing market - a market which also includes some of the few competitors to the Live Nation/Ticketmaster monopoly, such as Stub Hub, Vivid, SeatGeek, Gametime and a few others.

Were AB 1720 to become law the main beneficiary of the bill would actually be the monopoly itself. How? The bill caps prices and profits for the precious few competitors to the monopoly but does nothing to limit the monopoly's predatory behavior against consumers and others. But what about the talking point that the monopoly itself will be trimmed under this bill? This is essentially known as a loss-leader strategy - the monopoly pretends to be making a big sacrifice for consumers, but their real objective is to harm the economics of the secondary ticketing industry such that this limited competition would be diminished and ultimately eliminated. Does anybody actually think that if the monopoly gained more control over the secondary ticketing market this would be good for consumers in the long run? Only a monopolist would defend such an action.

Music industry experts, artists, independent promoters, independent venue operators, secondary marketplaces, and consumer groups are all generally in agreement that Live Nation has a monopoly in the entertainment industry and that monopoly is harming artists and consumers. Where they differ is in the conclusion that protecting the current practices in the secondary market is protecting consumers, artists, and small venue operators. As described previously, the secondary resellers and platforms are not competing with Ticketmaster in the primary market. Resellers are, in fact, *customers* of Ticketmaster since they very often purchase the tickets they resell from the company, thus contributing to its success.

Will price caps increase fraud? On price caps increasing fraud, StubHub writes:

Examples from other countries show that price caps, implemented with the same good intentions as AB 1720, ultimately harm fans and preview what California consumers can expect if this bill becomes law. In Ireland, following price cap legislation, ticket scams surged, with financial institutions reporting significant increases in fraud victims and losses. In Australia, fans lost hundreds of thousands of dollars to ticket scams as resale shifted to social media platforms; notably, 25% of Australian young people have reportedly fallen victim to social media scams, with concert tickets among the most common scams. In France, authorities identified hundreds of fraudulent ticket websites during the Paris Olympics but were only able to shut down a fraction. In each case, after a price cap was enacted, demand remained constant while legal resale channels contracted and fraud increased.

StubHub points to a surge in ticket scams in Ireland after the passage of resale price caps in 2021. However, the citation they provide as evidence of that fact is simply a fraud warning by the Bank of Ireland related to Taylor Swift's 2024 Eras Tour, arguably one of the most popular music artists in history. It is not surprising that banks expected an increase in ticket scams, given her popularity and the difficulty obtaining tickets. Nothing in the fraud warning suggests that the concern is in any way related to price caps on resale tickets.

In addition to the scam warnings from Irish banks, StubHub points to a November 2022 report, *Reflecting Ireland: An insight into consumer behavioural change in Ireland*.¹⁹ The report found that financial fraud was on the increase, with 75 percent of people in Ireland experiencing attempted fraud and over 25 percent becoming victims. Their research found that the "most common types of financial fraud are vishing (phone call / voice message), smishing (text message) and phishing (email). Other common scams relate to lottery wins, inheritance, investment, romance, tickets sales or property rental."²⁰ As with other countries, including the United States, internet fraud in Ireland was increasing significantly. In the 12 months leading up to June 2022, a total of 16,202 incidents of fraud were reported, an increase of 43% over the previous year and more than three times the level reported 5 years ago. The researchers found that the increase was largely driven by unauthorized transactions and attempts to obtain personal or banking information online or by phone.²¹ The researchers found that 11 percent of the people surveyed experienced ticket fraud and 5 percent became victims. This contrasts with over half of the respondents reporting that they had experienced vishing, smishing, and phishing scams.²² At no point does the report draw any connection between price caps recently being imposed and an increase in ticketing scams. They also do not identify whether the scams took place on a ticket resale platform or elsewhere.

The opposition also argues that ticketing fraud in the 2024 Summer Olympics in France was related to the cap on ticket prices in France's resale market. First, it is important to note that the amendments from the Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism Committee explicitly exempt most sports from the ticket price cap, including the LA28 Olympics. So, the Summer Olympics and any future Olympic games should not be impacted. That being said, sports and tourism experts are already issuing urgent warnings about tickets scams during the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics. A quick internet search turns up warning after warning about the likelihood of being scammed. One travel expert has issued this warning, "Sports fans need to remain vigilant this week. As with any other major event, scammers will try to take advantage of this lucrative opportunity to con people. This could be tricking you into handing over personal details via fake registration sites or parting with your money to secure tickets early (which are fakes)."²³

As it pertains to the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup in Los Angeles, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), the self-regulating governing body for professional soccer, recently faced its own accusations that they are scamming people trying to purchase tickets. FIFA originally allowed unlimited resales, with no price cap on the ticket price

¹⁹ *Reflecting Ireland: An insight into consumer behavioural change in Ireland*, permanent tsb, (Nov. 2022) <https://www.ptsb.ie/globalassets/pdf-documents/reflecting-ireland---fraud.pdf>.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ William Morgan, "Travel expert issues warning ahead of LA28 Olympics ticket registration and what to do if you've been scammed," *Unilad* (Mar. 17, 2026) <https://www.unilad.com/news/sport/travel-expert-la28-olympics-ticket-registration-scam-warning-786529-20260317>.

and charged a 15% commission to both the buyers and the sellers. As a result, according to reports, a ticket to the men's finals with an original price of \$2,030 could be purchased in the resale market for \$25,000 within 24 hours. As a result, FIFA earned a commission of \$7,500, over three times the price of the original value "without providing any additional service."²⁴

The unfortunate reality is whenever there is a concert, game, or other extremely popular team, artist or event, people will find a way to defraud consumers, completely unrelated to whether there is a price cap or not. For decades, along with ticket fraud fans, artists and sports teams have had to contend with bootlegged music and movies and counterfeit sports jerseys and other memorabilia.

As recent evidence suggests, instances of fraud are not only found on platforms outside of the secondary marketplace. Recent news reports say a growing number of attendees at the Coachella music festival are reporting systemic failures within the secondary ticketing market. "According to reports, third-party platforms including StubHub are under fire for allowing sellers to default on long-standing 'guaranteed' orders without adequate recourse for the buyers."²⁵ The article further contends:

The crisis stems from a massive surge in demand over the last 10 days, which has seen general admission wristband values skyrocket to over \$3,000, with some VIP listings exceeding \$5,000. Fans who purchased tickets months ago at significantly lower prices—frequently around \$600—allege that sellers are intentionally failing to deliver passes to capitalize on the price hike. These same passes are reportedly being relisted for whole multiples of the original cost, while the original buyers are left with travel and accommodation booked but no entry to the festival.

While platforms like StubHub officially operate under a 'FanProtect Guarantee', critics argue the system is fundamentally broken. In many cases, the platforms offer a simple refund rather than sourcing comparable replacement tickets, which are now prohibitively expensive for the platforms to provide. Beyond that, there's no accounting for the related expenses incurred like time, travel, accommodations, and more, which could potentially be for naught in these situations.

This lack of accountability has led to accusations of "criminal" behavior on the secondary market, as entire groups of fans find themselves stranded in the desert with no viable options for entry.²⁶

As with so many discussions in the last few years about entertainment ticket policy, all roads eventually lead back to Taylor Swift and her Eras Tour. On March 3, 2025, the Queens County (New York) district attorney arrested two suspects accused of stealing more than 900 concert

²⁴ Girish Sanwal, "FIFA Owes Fans Thousands for Resold World Cup Tickets: Complete Scandal Breakdown," *FWC News* (Dec. 20, 2025)

²⁵ Bryson Page, "Coachella and StubHub Under Fire as Tickets are Canceled and Resold for \$3,000+," *EDM Tunes* (Apr. 10, 2026) <https://www.edmtunes.com/2026/04/coachella-stubhub-controversy-ticket-orders-canceled-resold/amp/>.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

tickets, most of which were for Swift's Eras Tour, and reselling them for a profit of more than \$600,000.²⁷ The author, Kishani Udugampola writes:

The Queens district attorney's office said that one of the defendants and an accomplice, who both worked for a third-party contractor in Kingston, Jamaica, used their access to StubHub's computer system to find a secure area of the network that contained URLs of sold tickets. They allegedly redirected the URLs to their coconspirators in Queens who posted the tickets to StubHub then raked in the cash for worthless tickets.

The Queens fraudsters are just a few of the thousands who illegally profited from the record-breaking Eras Tour, which redefined the global music industry while simultaneously exposing structural vulnerabilities in digital marketplaces, consumer protection systems and financial oversight frameworks. The tour, which "surpassed \$2 billion in revenue, became the highest-grossing concert series in history.

[. . .]

Resale platforms such as StubHub, SeatGeek and Vivid Seats reported average resale prices between \$1,500 and \$3,000, compared to face values ranging from \$49 to \$499. In major metropolitan markets, ticket-resale prices can exceed face value by large margins, sometimes reaching 2,000% from original ticket prices below \$500, depending on seat tier, event popularity and proximity to the event date.

However, unlike official ticket-sales markets, secondary-ticket markets operate with inconsistent transparency, fragmented oversight and limited safeguards — conditions that increase fraud risk.²⁸

As can be seen, an uncapped secondary market has not spared US consumers from the type of fraudulent activity opponents claim a price cap will induce.

Are price caps unworkable? Finally, Tick Pick, Seat Geek, and Gametime state:

The bill requires marketplaces to cap non-sports tickets at 110% of the "face" or original price. However, ticket resale marketplaces do not purchase or set ticket prices. Sellers own the tickets, set their own resale prices, and only they and the original seller know how much they paid for the tickets. Moreover, the great majority of live event tickets do not print the original or "face value" price, largely because prices increasingly fluctuate based on demand, and buying in a pre-sale, public on-sale, or the days before an event will often be at very different prices for essentially the same seat - even when all the purchases are from the official venue website.

In this environment, only two parties can inform the marketplace of the original ticket prices - the original seller and the reseller.

²⁷ Kishani Udugampola, Ph.D., CFE, "Taylor Swift's Eras tour exposes ticket resale fraud," *Association of Certified Fraud Examiners' Fraud Magazine* (April 6, 2026) <https://www.acfe.com/fraud-magazine/all-issues/issue/article?s=2026-apr-taylor-swift-tour-ticket-fraud>.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

It may be difficult for a resale platform to confirm the actual amount someone paid for a ticket when they purchased it. It would not be impossible. The reseller could be required to provide the platform with a receipt that corresponds to a serial number on a ticket, for example. However, recent amendments should alleviate the secondary marketplaces' concerns. The amendments require that original ticket sellers include the total price paid for the ticket on the ticket, whether it is a paper ticket or digital. If it is a paper ticket, the total price would be added when it is printed. For digital tickets, they need to include the full price when they are generated. This requirement, arguably, should remove any confusion or mystery around how much a person paid for the ticket.

7) **Analysis.** Opponents fail to answer one simple question: why was a Taylor Swift concert ticket less than \$350 in countries with price caps and between \$800 and \$2600 in the United States? If Ticketmaster's monopoly is solely to blame, why is the average markup on secondary sites 203% over face value? The reality is the single most impactful policy for controlling the price of tickets is a cap both on the resale price and on the amount of fees secondary marketplaces can charge resellers and buyers. The primary difference between the price of tickets in California and the prices in other countries can be traced to capping the amount someone is allowed to resell a ticket for. In Europe, prices are kept low thanks to laws limiting how high tickets can be marked up above face value when they are resold.

This bill, along with two others that the Committee is hearing this year, are all seeking to rein in a predatory secondary market that competes with consumers in the primary market in order to sell them an item or experience for a higher price than they would have had to pay otherwise. Whether it is reselling entertainment tickets, trying to schedule a tee time, or making reservations for a restaurant, pickleball court, or camp site.

As previously noted, this bill establishes a ten percent cap on how much live entertainment ticket resellers can charge in the secondary ticket market, in other words, a ticket cannot be sold for more than 110 percent of the price that was paid for the original ticket. In addition, the bill caps at ten percent the amount that platforms can charge buyers and sellers in fees. This is potentially the most generous of the three bills. The other two limit unauthorized resale. One of the bills focuses on prohibiting the resale of restaurant reservations²⁹ and the other prohibits the resale of tee time reservations at municipal golf courses.³⁰ All three bills seek to discourage people who are competing with actual customers by buying tickets, tee-times, or amassing restaurant reservations with the intention of reselling them back to the customers at an inflated price.

Whether Ticketmaster or another on-sale ticket company sells a ticket to a reseller or to an actual customer, their profits remain the same. The Future of Music Coalition, a supporter of the bill, describes the situation this way:

It's helpful to think of the effort to "fix ticketing" as consisting of two distinct "buckets," which add up to a complementary and holistic public policy approach.

The first bucket is about structural competition issues and the harms that follow from consolidated ownership. This includes the factors that California and the other remaining state plaintiffs seek to address in their anti-trust lawsuit against Ticketmaster/Live Nation,

²⁹ AB 1640 (Stefani)

³⁰ AB 1954 (Ward)

and the factors that led UK regulators to require divestments when secondary sellers Viagogo and Stubhub merged in 2021.

The second bucket is market regulation, which is concerned with rules of the road that apply to every firm; it's a means of addressing potentially harmful practices and behavioral concerns by anyone in the field. AB1720 is about this piece. It's a tough bill that reflects best practices and consumer protection approaches that have worked well in nations that have adopted similar policies.

[. . .]

It makes sense that while anti-trust authorities are focused on a breakup lawsuit, legislative approaches at both state and federal levels can focus on addressing that second “market regulation” bucket. Anti-trust enforcement and good state-level legislation like California's AB 1720 (and AB 1349) go hand in hand. Either effort on its own would be insufficient to address the range of problems, but together, they add up to sound policy that protects fans, workers, small businesses, and diverse creative expression. This approach is growing in momentum; the new Senate report on Ticketmaster, years in the making, endorses price caps as one of the policy recommendations for how to address dysfunction in the ticket market.³¹

Since 2021, Ireland has capped the resale price of a ticket at what it originally sold for in the primary market. In 2024, there was one state considering price caps (Maryland). That provision made it through one of two chambers. In 2026, at least seventeen states are considering some version of a price cap, and one state has passed a price cap successfully (Maine).

While generally limiting prices in most markets could be seen as something to be leery of, this market is the rare exception where there is a justification to limit resale prices given how fundamentally broken the ticket resale market is. Californian consumers should not have to pay ticket prices that can reach an order of magnitude more expensive than their European counterparts have to pay.

This bill, when combined with AB 1349 (Bryan), which limits speculative ticketing practices, likely would address some of the largest problems in the secondary ticket market and would significantly reduce ticket prices in addition to making it easier for consumers to purchase tickets in the primary market for face value.

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: Sponsors of the bill, National Independent Talent (NITO), argue:

The Problem

AB 1720 addresses a well-documented problem in today's secondary ticketing market: the proliferation of speculative listings and excessive markups that distort pricing, mislead consumers, and undermine confidence in the marketplace. Artists make deliberate pricing decisions to ensure that live events remain accessible to their fans while supporting the real costs of touring. When tickets are immediately resold at excessive markups, those decisions

³¹ *So Casually Cruel: How Ticketmaster's Monopoly Supercharges Prices and Fees*, United States Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Senator Blumenthal Minority Staff Report (Mar. 16, 2026) https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026_03_16-Live-Event-Ticket-Report-1.pdf.

are undermined and California consumers are forced to pay prices that bear no relationship to the event's original intent or value.

NITO's own research shows resale prices average twice the face value of primary tickets, and the average concert in a 1,700 capacity venue generates over \$40,000 in profit from resale alone. That means those Californians are paying \$40,000 more than they should for an average concert. These inflated prices do not benefit artists, venues, or anyone responsible for producing the event. Instead, they extract significant dollars from consumers and divert spending away from local restaurants, bars, and surrounding small businesses that depend on live events to drive foot traffic.

Real-World Examples

NITO has documented instances where over 50% of available tickets for a single show were resold on secondary platforms. Unforeseen circumstances, like an illness or the babysitter cancelling, do not explain half the audience reselling a ticket. It is the result of industrial-scale resale operations, often backed by outside investors and private equity. Regular fans are not competing with each other for the best seats; they are competing against well-funded professionals armed with the latest technology, whose sole aim is to extract profit from the system.

When Oasis played the Rose Bowl in 2025, primary market tickets had dynamic pricing turned off, with prices ranging from \$81 to \$156. Yet data from the secondary market, accounting for approximately 60% of StubHub sales, showed over 8,000 tickets sold at a gross of \$2.2 million. The average ticket on StubHub was \$270.

One NITO member reported an instance to the FTC in which resellers hijacked a public on-sale at Intuit Arena. Using bots to hold nearly all available inventory in their carts without completing purchases, these actors blocked regular fans from securing any tickets and forced them to secondary sites at inflated prices. These practices erode consumer confidence and drive people away from attending live music events altogether.

Why Legislative Action Is Necessary

We cannot rely on large corporations to police these bad actors on behalf of artists. In emails revealed during the ongoing anti-trust trial, Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino acknowledged that some of the company's artist-protection tools were designed so the company could tell artists it had "tried to stop scalpers." Meanwhile, artists are left to post on their own social media pages, pleading with fans not to buy tickets at huge markups and educating their audiences to avoid being scammed. This is precisely why the comprehensive reform laid out in AB 1720 is needed.

What AB 1720 Does

AB 1720 takes a measured and balanced approach by:

- Establishing a reasonable cap on resale prices to curb excessive speculation
- Preserving the ability for legitimate, consumer-to-consumer resale
- Promoting transparency and accountability in ticket transactions
- Carves out sporting events from the resale cap

Importantly, these caps do not eliminate resale. They simply prevent abuse. Fans who genuinely cannot attend an event retain the ability to resell their tickets, while the most predatory profiteering practices are curtailed. Similarly, sporting events which function completely differently from live performances, are untouched by the resale cap leaving that industry to continue practices that work best for them.

Evidence from market analyses demonstrates that when appropriate resale protections are in place, abusive practices decline significantly and more tickets reach consumers at intended prices — resulting in a healthier and more trustworthy marketplace overall.

A coalition of organizations representing artists, independent promoters, and independent venue operators, writes in support:

At the heart of AB 1720 is a straightforward and powerful idea: no ticket should be resold for more than 10 percent above face value. This cap is the single most meaningful reform California can adopt to restore fairness to the ticketing marketplace. It directly addresses the core problem: industrial-scale resellers who purchase large quantities of tickets at initial sale and relist them at prices far beyond what the artist, venue, or promoter ever intended. These resellers extract enormous economic value from live music events without contributing to the creation, production, or promotion of those events. A face value cap stops that extraction at the source.

Music artists invest significant creative, financial, and personal resources in bringing live performances to their fans. The ability to set the terms and conditions of ticket sales including price, transferability, and access is an extension of that creative and economic investment. When a reseller marks up a ticket by two, five, or ten times its face value, the artist's pricing decision is overridden, and the economic relationship between artist and fan is hijacked by a middleman who had no role in making the event happen nor any stake in the community they're extracting the value from. A resale cap preserves the artist's intent and keeps that relationship intact.

For fans, the impact of uncapped resale is devastating and deeply personal. When tickets are acquired in bulk and relisted at excessive markups, events of all sizes become financially out of reach for many Californians. A parent trying to take their child to a first concert, a young person saving up to see their favorite artist - these are the people who are priced out when the secondary market operates without limits. AB 1720's cap ensures that more tickets end up in the hands of fans who actually intend to attend, at prices close to what the artist set. The bill also rightly distinguishes between true fans who resell a ticket due to changed plans and high-volume resale activity driven by systematic bulk purchasing and markup strategies.

Independent venues, small businesses, nonprofit stages, and community-based promoters serve as economic anchors and incubators for emerging artists across California. The crews and venue staff who make live performances possible depend on the economic ecosystem surrounding those events. When industrial resellers siphon ticket revenue out of that ecosystem, it is the venues, the crew members, and the local economies that suffer. A face value cap keeps more of the economic value of live events where it belongs: with the people and places that make them possible.

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: In opposition to the bill, along with the arguments discussed in the body of the analysis, a coalition of community business organizations write:

The fundamental issue in today’s ticketing market is the entrenched monopoly power of Live Nation/Ticketmaster. This vertically integrated conglomerate controls ticketing, promotions, and venues. Roughly 80% of all primary ticketing sales occur on Ticketmaster. Its dominance has produced excessive fees, opaque pricing, and widespread consumer harm. Recently revealed internal company communications describe fans as “so stupid” and boast about “robbing them blind” - the predictable result of unchecked market power.

Yet just weeks ago, the Trump Administration’s Department of Justice entered into a deeply flawed settlement with Live Nation/Ticketmaster, which was widely criticized as a concession that failed to restrain the company’s behavior. The vast majority of states, including California, have rejected that deal and are continuing their case. When federal enforcement falls short, it is even more vital that California act to rein in monopoly practices—not shift the burden onto consumers.

Instead, AB 1720 is myopically focused on limiting the price at which consumers can resell their tickets, even though resale accounts for only a small fraction – roughly 9 percent – of total ticket sales. Meanwhile, Ticketmaster’s monopoly retains full control over how much they can charge on primary sales. They can continue to engage in anti-consumer tactics like dynamic pricing, exclusive pre-sales, and inventory holdbacks, all of which drive up costs and reduce access.

AB 1720’s approach also raises serious equity and consumer protection concerns. Many consumers, particularly low-income Californians, depend on resale as a financial safety valve when plans change. Tying resale limits to the “original price” is unworkable in a primary marketplace defined by secrecy, where consumers often have no clear way to determine what the original price was. As a result, individuals could be forced to sell at a loss or risk violating the law, while Ticketmaster continues to “rob fans blind” and perpetuate the same anti-consumer practices that were the focus of President Biden’s antitrust lawsuit.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

National Independent Talent Organization (Sponsor)

72 Music MGMT

American Association of Independent Music

American Federation of Musicians

Artist Rights Alliance

Association of Performing Arts Professionals

Black Music Action Coalition

California Arts Advocates

Fan Alliance

Folk Alliance International

Future of Music Coalition

Ground Control Touring

Ineffable Music Group

Like Management
Live Nation Entertainment, INC.
Lucky Man Management
Mongrel Music
Music Artists Coalition (MAC)
Music Managers Forum - US
National Independent Venue Association of California (NIVA-CA)
Paradise Artists, Inc.
Partisan Arts
Recording Academy
Recording Industry Association of America
ROAM
Sag-aftra
Songwriters of North America
Sound Talent Group
Stuart Ross Management
TBA Agency, LLC
United Musicians and Allied Workers

Opposition

California Black Chamber of Commerce
California Hispanic Chambers of Commerce
California League of United Latin American Citizens (ca Lulac)
California Live Events Equity Alliance
California Multicultural Business Alliance
Central City Association of Los Angeles
Central Valley Latino Mayors and Elected Officials Coalition
Central Valley Yemen Society
Coalition for Ticket Fairness
Consumer Federation of California
Gametime
Hispanic 100
Hispanic Chambers of Commerce of San Francisco
Latin American and Caribbean Business Chamber of Commerce
Latin Business Association
National Action Network Sacramento
National Baptist Convention Usa, INC
North Valley Yemen Society
Progressive Policy Institute
Seatgeek, INC.
Si Se Puede Fresno, Tulare, Kings & Kern
Sports Fans Coalition
Stubhub, INC.
Ticket Policy Forum
Tickpick, LLC

Oppose Unless Amended

Internet Works
Technet

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