



Testimony to the House Economic Matters Committee  
HB 795: Commercial Law-Consumer Protection-Ticket Sales  
(Event Goer Rights & Accountable Sales-ERAS Act)  
Position: Favorable

February 22, 2023

The Honorable C.T. Wilson, Chair  
House Economic Matters Committee  
Room 231, House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
cc: Members, House Economic Matters

Honorable Chair Wilson and Members of the Committee:

Economic Action Maryland (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) is a people-centered movement to expand economic rights, housing justice, and community reinvestment for working families, low-income communities, and communities of color. Economic Action Maryland provides direct assistance today while passing legislation and regulations to create systemic change in the future.

We are writing in support of HB 795 and urge a favorable report. HB 795 would bring critical transparency, fairness, and accountability to ticket sales platforms and create some important guardrails to concert goers.

Today, ticketing platforms, notably Ticketmaster since its merger with Live Nation in 2010, has a virtual monopoly on ticketing for large concerts and venues. This vertical integration is a de facto monopoly and enables these large firms to engage in deceptive practices and add-ons.

Some specific examples include

- **restrictions, prohibitions, or fees to resell a ticket**—a practice virtually unheard of in any other service or product. What other industry tells you what you can do with a product once you have paid for it?
- **Establishing onerous requirements to gain entry to a venue**-requiring a photo identification or the card used to purchase the ticket to enter the venue.
- **Opaque refund policies** -refund policies have been difficult to find, narrowly scoped, and difficult for many consumers to obtain
- **Junk fees**-between 1996-2003, the average concert ticket price rose 82 percent and the bulk of these costs are add-on fees.



- **Deceptive advertising of ticket price**-because of all of the additional add-on fees, the price of the ticket advertised and the final cost of the ticket are very different-often 22-38% more than the advertised price

HB 795 expands consumer protections for concert goers, increases transparency for ticket pricing and ticket fairness, eliminates prohibitions on what consumers can do with tickets after purchasing them while maintaining some important guardrails to address concerns about bulk purchases and preserving the right of the venue and ticket seller to make certain decisions about ticket sales.

For all these reasons, we support HB 795 and urge a favorable report.

Best,

Marceline White  
Executive Director