



NIVA AND FIX THE TIX APPLAUD MARYLAND'S LANDMARK TICKETING BILL

SB539 Will Become a National Model to Hold Predatory Resellers Accountable for Defrauding Fans

April 9, 2024 - The National Independent Venue Association (NIVA) and the Fix the Tix Coalition commend the passage of Maryland Senate Bill 539 and thank the advocates, fans, and bill sponsors who have worked tirelessly to push forward this groundbreaking legislation. Now, live entertainment fans in the state of Maryland will be able to purchase tickets to their favorite shows without the looming fear of fraud and deception.

This bill includes the following key provisions:

- It bans the deceptive practice of advertising and selling “speculative,” or fake, tickets
- It holds resale platforms accountable, under Maryland’s Consumer Protection Act, for selling or offering speculative tickets and enforces violations of this provision with substantial fines.
- It mandates that the Consumer Protection Division of the Attorney General’s Office conduct a comprehensive review on Maryland’s entire ticketing marketplace
- It requires transparent ticket pricing throughout the ticket-buying process.
- It codifies that a ticket is a license.
- It stipulates that the law takes effect July 1, 2024.

“Maryland Senate Bill 539 marks a significant milestone in consumer protection for fans and artists,” said Stephen Parker, Executive Director of the National Independent Venue Association. “This bill safeguards consumers from the deceptive ticketing practices that have plagued Maryland and the nation for far too long. Every fan deserves to know that their ticket is real and where their money is going. The Maryland bill does just that. Nearly 17,000 Maryland constituents wrote letters urging their legislators to pass this critical legislation. We are proud to support this bill and eager to use it as a model for ticketing reform across the country.”

“The passage of SB539 proves that when policymakers center the voices of local music communities, including artists, independent venues, nonprofit arts groups and our allies across the live entertainment ecosystem, we really can achieve meaningful reforms that benefit fans, workers, and small businesses,” says Kevin Erickson, Executive Director of the Future of Music Coalition. “We’re profoundly grateful for the leadership of Senator Dawn Gile and her cosponsors Senators Beidle, Feldman, and Ellis as well as Delegate C.T. Wilson in the House. And while we’re celebrating today, we also look forward to working with the Attorney General’s office on their forthcoming study of the industry, as we look to achieve further reforms to strengthen music communities and end deceptive and predatory business practices in live event ticketing, in Maryland and across the nation.”

“Maryland made it clear, when you listen to artists and venues, you pass stronger legislation,” said Nathaniel Marro, Managing Director of the National Independent Talent Organization. “NITO applauds legislators in Maryland for protecting consumers by passing the strongest speculative ticket ban in the country and looks forward to working with them further on their study of the resale market and its harms.”

More information on Fix the Tix may be found at www.fixthetix.org.

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