



Date: April 22, 2026

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing & General Affairs

From: Susan Evans McClure, Executive Director, Vermont Arts Council

Re: H.512 An act relating to the regulation of the event ticketing market

You've heard a lot on this topic, but at the end of the day it is not complicated. Scalping tickets is wrong; it hurts Vermonters and Vermont businesses, and it should not be legal in our state. If we want to have the strong communities and local economies that I know you all want too, Vermont needs to be a place that protects our small businesses and consumers.

Over the past few weeks, you've heard directly from event venues about how this distorted market hurts the very Vermont event venues that drive our local economies. You've heard from Vermonters about how these predatory practices are taking money out of their wallets and delivering it directly out of state. You've heard from international experts who told you how this problem has been successfully addressed around the world. And you've heard lies and fear mongering from the giant corporations who are profiting off of greed and ticket scalping, right here in Vermont.

The question today is: whose perspective are you going to centralize in your decision making? The hundreds of Vermont small businesses who signed a letter in support of H.512 think it should be them. And the hundreds of individual Vermonters who signed the same letter think it should be them. And the few giant predatory ticket resale companies think they should be allowed to continue to make money off of Vermonters, scalp tickets, and make it even harder for our event venues to do the business we so desperately need them to do for our communities.

When an out-of-state company spends unlimited money to defeat legislation that is widely supported by Vermonters, you have to ask yourself why that is. In this case, it is because they are worried that basic consumer protections will not allow them to make money hand over fist from hardworking Vermonters.

Ticket Policy Forum is an organization founded just one year ago expressly to stop state legislation like this from passing. This organization has spent over \$1.1 million dollars so far in California to defeat a similar bill. This industry uses industry-funded studies and they cherry pick the so-called data to make their points, and their points are to continue making money off of Vermonters. We all agree that Ticketmaster/Live Nation is a monopoly, and now a federal court has agreed to that too. But that is a totally different issue than the other predatory ticket resellers. 2 things can be bad at the same time.

- And it's important to note that the Champlain Valley Expo grandstands can hold 10,000 spectators. So if you added a seat cap at 3,500 it would directly target the Expo and none of us want that. What Brian is suggesting here is just total distraction

But this can actually be a good news story! We have a proven way to stop this, and H.512 is your chance to fix a broken system.

I'm speaking on behalf of the event venues and fans, and we do have major reservations about changing the definition of a reseller from a person to a business. As we have demonstrated, it is *individual* bad actors, working through resale platforms who are profiting off of this and must be stopped.

The Amendment from the House floor was not approved- and it's important to include here that nothing in this bill would stop individuals from reselling their tickets. In fact, this legislation will create a more transparent, fair, and safe market for individuals to resell their tickets.

This bill needs to apply to all tickets to Vermont event venues. When venues have tracked down resellers, they are always out of state individuals who purchase a ticket expressly for resell, and then resell it for grossly inflated price, taking money out of Vermonters pockets. Sen. Ram Hinsdale brought up the example of fraud on social media, but what our venues are reporting are fans buying tickets through resale platforms from individuals. It is not tickets for sale on front porch forum or craigslist. In fact, I just searched on Vermont craigslist for ticket right now and there is 1 ticket for sale, and it's at face value. That is just some of the inflammatory language that resale companies are perpetrating. It's just not happening on a mass scale. This bill addresses what is happening on a mass scale. As we have shown, there is no credible evidence that regulating this market drives people to black market social media sites.

Earlier, you heard about laws in other states- and yes, we would be one of the first, after Maine. But the other states that have passed ticket bills that do not include a price cap and

now going back and asking for a price cap- you heard from Maryland specifically, that while their bill is good, it has not fixed the issue because it doesn't have a price cap. And frankly, I'm proud that Vermont is taking a stand on this to protect venues and consumers.

The state of California is currently moving a bill<sup>1</sup> through their Legislature with a 10% price cap that includes an even stricter definition of a ticket reseller. The original definition in this bill provides a balanced approach that allows the Attorney General's office to successfully enforce this law.

But I also know that this situation with resale scalping is so dire that something is better than nothing, so if this is the compromise it takes to move forward, we are willing to live with that- knowing that all processes are iterative.

Similarly, we are willing to accept the sunset because we know that these laws have been successful in other areas and we can show that. However, I do have concerns if we weaken the definition of a reseller, this law will be harder to enforce, and we may not have the data as quickly on the law's success. So while we're ok with a sunset, we would also encourage you to consider a longer sunset period.

I don't know how many other ways I can say that Vermonters want these common sense regulations. Free market capitalism can only work when the market is actually free- and right now the ticket resale market in Vermont is wildly distorted. What we are asking for is that Vermont align with the successful practices of countries around the world. And that Vermont takes strong steps to protect the things that make Vermont special: our live events, our concerts, our sports, and the communities that come together around them.

You ran on making life more affordable for Vermonters, I know that's important to all of you. This bill is how to do that. These common sense regulations are how to do that. These protections for the things people care about are how to do that. Live events bring people together and create a deep sense of community. But when Vermonters can't afford it because of a predatory marketplace, we all lose out.

Don't choose greedy ticket scalpers over everyday Vermonters. The many, many Vermont venues and fans who believe in this legislation thank you for the hard work you've done to understand this issue, and your commitment to solving it.

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<sup>1</sup> AB 1720: Ticket sellers "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."  
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