

Date of Hearing: April 7, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND TOURISM
Christopher M. Ward, Chair
AB 1720 (Haney) – As Amended March 19, 2026

SUBJECT: Ticket sellers

SUMMARY: AB 1720 prohibits tickets sellers from reselling tickets to concerts and entertainment events for more than the equivalent of the original price of the ticket plus 10%.

Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Prohibits a ticket seller from selling a ticket for more than the equivalent of the original price for the ticket if it has been acquired directly from the primary contractor plus 10%.
 - a) This limit applies to the total price paid by the consumer and includes any required fees charged by the ticket seller or any digital platform through which the ticket is sold.
 - b) A ticket seller shall be liable for a civil penalty of up \$1,000 per ticket sold in violation for a first violation, and up to \$2,500 for a subsequent violation. A knowing and willful pattern or practice of violation is punishable by a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 per ticket sold in violation.
 - c) This section shall not apply to tickets to professional athletic events.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) 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.)
- 2) 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.
 - 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.)
- 3) Requires that 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.)
- 4) 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.)
- 5) Authorizes a ticket seller to accept a deposit from a prospective purchaser as part of an agreement that the ticket seller will make best efforts to obtain a ticket at a specified price or price range and within a specified time, provided that the ticket seller informs the purchaser, in a specified manner, of the terms of the deposit agreement and makes required disclosures. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22502.1.)
- 6) Prohibits a ticket seller from representing that it can deliver, or cause to be delivered, a ticket at a specific price or within a specific price range and fail to deliver the ticket a) within a reasonable time and b) below or within the price and range of prices stated. (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22502.2.)
- 7) Provides a private right of action to ticket purchasers for violations of 5) and 6). (Bus. & Prof. Code § 22502.3.)
- 8) 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.)

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

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. This measure has been keyed fiscal by Legislative Counsel.

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) Background. For decades, live events were accessible to middle class and working fans who wanted to see their favorite artist or band live in concert, their favorite musical come to town, or enjoy a comedy show after a long week. Fans could purchase tickets at the box office and see world-famous bands like the Rolling Stones at affordable prices. That changed with the transition of ticket sales to online platforms and the rise of ticket scalping as a highly profitable scheme.

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.

These practices allow ticket scalpers to profit significantly without contributing to the event itself. When a fan purchases a ticket through the primary market, their money supports the artist, the venue, and the staff who make the event possible. But when they pay thousands of dollars over the face value on the secondary market, the money only goes into the scalper's pocket. A recent analysis by the National Independent Talent Organization found that ticket resellers earned an average cumulative profit of \$41,000 per show by charging roughly double the original ticket price.

- 3) Live event ticketing. Tickets purchased online are typically found on either primary ticket seller websites or on the secondary market. Primary ticket sellers, including Ticketmaster and AXS, work with event organizers to control ticket prices, and share revenue between the artists and the venue operators. The prices set in the primary market heavily affect the volume and value of tickets in the secondary market. Although the cost of tickets can fluctuate through dynamic pricing, tickets generally sell on the primary market with a face value that is below their market value. The number of tickets available is, of necessity, limited to the capacity of the venue, and of course are subject to sell outs.

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, especially for high-demand or sold-out concerts and sports games. Secondary market platforms not only serve as a way for consumers who are unable to use their tickets to have a relatively simple way of recouping their money and potentially making a profit by reselling them to someone else, they also are utilized by professional ticket brokers. These brokers operate as a business that purchases event tickets solely for the purpose of reselling them to maximize profit.

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 include StubHub, Vivid Seats, TickPicks, and SeatGeek, as well as resale platforms run by Ticketmaster and AXS.

According to a 2018 report by the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO), ticket brokers are dominating the resale marketplaces. They 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 are pocketed by brokers who had no role in creating or producing the event.

- 4) Arguments in support. According to a group of supporters, including the Music Artists Coalition, the National Independent Venue Association, and others in the music industry, "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."

- 5) Arguments in opposition. According to a group of ticket resale platforms, including SeatGeek, TickPick, and Gametime, in opposition, "When secure markets do not exist or don't have inventory because tickets are nontransferable or price caps exist, consumers turn to alternative black markets, the digital equivalents of the fraud-ridden street resales that were pervasive pre-Internet. The consumer protections we provide on our ticketing platforms do not exist on Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, Reddit, or similar platforms, so buyers have no recourse when a seller fails to deliver or sends a fake ticket. The Taylor Swift Eras Tour provided many examples of this, as resale scams and fraud proliferated in countries where the supply of market-priced resale tickets was suppressed by price caps or other restrictions.

"Today, in federal court in New York City, Attorney General Bonta, and over 30 other State Attorneys General are litigating against Live Nation/Ticketmaster, seeking to promote competition by ending decades of monopoly behavior that has hurt fans, artists, and venues. In contrast, economists across the political spectrum agree that resale price caps such as those proposed in AB 1720 will strengthen the Ticketmaster monopoly by reducing competition in today's most competitive ticketing sector – resale."

- 6) Triple-referral. Should the bill pass from this committee, it will be re-referred to the Assembly Committee on Privacy and Consumer Protection, followed by the Assembly Committee on Judiciary.
- 7) Amendments and policy considerations. The Committee has worked with the author's office on amendments that add clarity to the ticket price limitations, by including mandatory fees for processing and delivery. The amendments also provide more specificity on the types of athletic events that are not subject to the bill, including tickets to an athletic contest sold by a season ticketholder or season ticket licenseholder, tickets to collegiate or amateur athletic contests or events, and athletic contests or events involving teams representing foreign nations, including the FIFA World Cup and Olympics.

As noted above, this bill is triple-referred to both the Privacy and Consumer Protection Committee and the Judiciary Committee. As this bill moves forward, the author should consider adding ways that a consumer can track and verify the original price of a ticket, especially considering dynamic pricing by primary sellers, in order to ensure that the total cost is correctly being provided to the purchaser of a resold ticket.

8) Prior and related legislation:

- a) AB 1349 (Bryan), of the current 2026 legislative session, would require an original ticket seller or a ticket reseller, before listing, marketing, or selling a ticket, to have actual or constructive possession of the ticket, or have the contractual right to sell the ticket. This bill is currently in the Senate pending referral to a policy committee.
- b) AB 2203 (McCarty), of 2024, would have required ticket sellers that sell admission tickets to sporting, musical, theater, or any other entertainment event, to immediately deliver a proof of purchase to a consumer, and would require a venue operator to honor that proof of purchase in lieu of the ticket if specified conditions are met. Died in the Senate Committee on Business, Professions, and Economic Development.
- c) AB 2808 (Wicks) of 2024, would have prohibited certain entertainment venue operators from entering into an exclusive contract with a primary ticket seller, among other requirements. Died in the Assembly Committee on Appropriations.
- d) AB 8 (Friedman), of 2023, would have required a ticket seller to disclose to a purchaser the total price of the ticket and the portion of that price that represents any fees or surcharges. The seller would have also been required to provide a link to an internet web page that includes certain refund requirements, as specified. Died in the Senate Committee on Appropriations.
- e) SB 478 (Dodd), Chapter 400, Statutes of 2023, made it an unlawful business practice pursuant to the Consumer Legal Remedies Act to advertise, display, or offer a price for a good or service that does not include all mandatory fees or charges other than taxes imposed by a government.
- f) SB 785 (Caballero), of 2023, would have updated laws regulating ticket sales by establishing new categories of ticket sellers, establishing requirements for different categories of ticket sellers, and increasing penalties for violations of rules governing ticket seller operations. Died on Assembly Third Reading.
- g) SB 829 (Wilk, 2023), would have prohibited the operator of an entertainment facility and a primary ticket seller from entering into a contract that provides for the primary ticket seller to be the exclusive ticket seller for the operator of the entertainment facility. Died in the Assembly Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism.
- h) AB 1556 (Friedman), Chapter 180, Statutes of 2021, requires, for cancelled events, that a refund be made within 30 calendar days of the cancellation. Requires a ticket price at any event which is postponed, rescheduled, or replaced with another event at the same date and time be fully refunded to the purchaser by the ticket seller upon request within 30 calendar days of the refund request.
- i) AB 1032 (Quirk), Chapter 105, Statutes of 2019, bolstered anti-bot provisions enacted by AB 329, described below, by clarifying that “a control or measure used to ensure an equitable ticket buying process” includes limits on the number of tickets that a person can purchase.

- j) SB 1001 (Hertzberg), Chapter 892, Statutes of 2018, prohibits a person from using a bot to communicate or interact with another person in California online with intent to mislead the other person about its artificial identity for the purpose of knowingly deceiving the person about the content of the communication in order to incentivize a purchase or sale of goods or services in a commercial transaction or to influence a vote in an election.
- k) AB 329 (Pan), Chapter 325, Statutes of 2013, made it a misdemeanor to intentionally use or sell software to circumvent a security measure, access control system, or other control or measure on a ticket seller's internet website that is used to ensure an equitable ticket buying process.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

1720 Warehouse
72 Music Management
Advance Redding
American Association of Independent Music
American Federation of Musicians
Artist Rights Alliance
Association of Performing Arts Professionals
Biscuits and Blues
Black Music Action Coalition
Cafe Colonial and the Colonial Theater
Fan Alliance
Fox Theater
Future of Music Coalition
Ground Control Touring
Harlow's
Ineffable Music Group
Like Management
Lucky Man Management
Moe's Alley
Mongrel Music
Music Artists Coalition
Music Box San Diego
Music Managers Forum - US
National Independent Talent Organization
National Independent Venue Association of California
National Independent Venue Association of California (NIVA-CA)
Nederlander Concerts
Paradise Artists, INC.
Paramount Theatre of the Arts, INC.
Partisan Arts
Recording Academy
Roam
Sag-aftra
Soda Bar

Songwriters of North America
Stuart Ross Management
Sound Talent Group
Tba Agency
The Boardwalk
Turlock Community Theater
United Musicians and Allied Workers

Opposition

Coalition for Ticket Fairness
Consumer Federation of California
Gametime
Seatgeek, INC.
Sports Fans Coalition
Stubhub, INC.
Ticket Policy Forum
Tickpick, LLC

Oppose Unless Amended

California Live Events Equity Alliance
Internet Works
TechNet

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