

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 77  
Economic Matters

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**Consumer Protection - Sale and Resale of Event Tickets - Registration and Regulation**

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This bill establishes a regulatory framework governing the sale and resale of event tickets. Under the bill, certain ticket resellers must register annually with the Office of the Attorney General's (OAG) Consumer Protection Division, obtain and maintain a surety bond, and report specified information to OAG biannually. OAG is authorized to revoke or suspend a registration for a violation of the bill. The bill establishes numerous other rules, procedures, and prohibitions related to the sale and resale of event tickets (some of which expand current statutory provisions related to the sale of speculative tickets). Violation of the bill is an unfair, abusive, or deceptive trade practice under the Maryland Consumer Protection Act (MCPA), subject to MCPA's civil and criminal penalty provisions.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures for OAG increase by approximately \$258,600 in FY 2027 to hire staff to administer and enforce the new program; future years reflect annualization and inflation. The bill's imposition of existing penalty provisions is not anticipated to have a material impact on State revenues; however, to the extent fines are assessed as a result of enforcement actions, special fund recoveries may increase.

(in dollars)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030	FY 2031
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	258,600	303,800	318,000	332,300	346,900
Net Effect	(\$258,600)	(\$303,800)	(\$318,000)	(\$332,300)	(\$346,900)

*Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease*

**Local Effect:** The bill's imposition of existing penalty provisions does not have a material impact on local government finances or operations.

**Small Business Effect:** Meaningful.

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## **Analysis**

### **Bill Summary:**

#### *Registration Requirement*

A reseller that sells (or offers to sell) at least 50 tickets in a calendar year must register annually with OAG to resell a ticket in the State. If a reseller lists a single ticket across multiple platforms, the total number of listings must count toward the registration threshold. Furthermore, any entity under common ownership or control of an individual must be considered a single reseller for purposes of the registration requirement imposed by the bill.

A reseller must apply for registration using an application form provided by OAG that includes specified information (*e.g.*, the applicant's full legal name and any aliases or usernames used to resell tickets, the applicant's contact information, Social Security Number, etc.). OAG is prohibited from publicly disclosing certain information.

OAG must (1) maintain a list of all registrants that includes information on each registrant's violations, if any, within the immediately preceding five years; (2) publish the list on OAG's publicly accessible website; and (3) update the list at least once every 30 days.

Each registrant must submit to OAG a report for the immediately preceding six-month period (1) within 30 days after July 1, 2027, (and on or before each July 1 thereafter) and (2) within 30 days after January 1, 2028 (and on or before each January 1 thereafter). The report must include the following information for the reporting period:

- the total number of tickets the registrant sold;
- the original purchase price of each initial ticket purchased by the registrant that the registrant sold; and
- the final resale price of each ticket the registrant sold.

A registrant must obtain and maintain a surety bond of \$10,000 or more. The surety bond must cover compensation for lost funds by a consumer, including travel expenses incurred by the consumer if the registrant fails to deliver a purchased ticket or engages in a violation of the bill (or related provisions). OAG may adjust the surety bond amount for a registrant based on the registrant's sales volume and consumer complaint history. The registrant must submit evidence of the surety bond to a secondary ticket exchange before listing any ticket for resale.

OAG may revoke or suspend a registration for a period of at least one year (but not longer than five years).

#### *Secondary Ticket Exchange Requirements*

Under the bill, a secondary ticket exchange must:

- maintain records of all registrants that use the exchange and verify that each registrant meets the bill's registration requirements;
- report to OAG any unregistered or noncompliant resellers selling or offering to sell a ticket on the secondary ticket exchange; and
- maintain records of all ticket sales on the secondary ticket exchange, including the number of tickets and the price of each ticket sold or resold.

Each secondary ticket exchange must report to OAG the same information required of registrants (noted above) over the same reporting period.

#### *Purchase Price of Tickets*

Generally, the total price at which a reseller may sell or offer to sell a ticket may not exceed the total price of the initial ticket, including all fees and taxes in connection with the initial ticket, plus 10% of the total price. If initial tickets were purchased for a series of events (such as season tickets for a sports team), the total resale price of a ticket for a single event may not exceed the total price of a comparable single ticket, including all fees and taxes, plus 10% of the total price. These requirements do not apply to a fee that a secondary ticket exchange may charge for the service of providing a marketplace for the resale of a ticket.

A secondary ticket exchange may not charge for the service of providing a marketplace for the resale of a ticket a fee that exceeds 10% of the total price, including all fees and taxes, of the initial ticket.

#### *Timing of Required Refund*

A ticket issuer, secondary ticket exchange, or reseller must provide a refund that is required under current statutory provisions within 10 days after:

- the ticket issuer, secondary ticket exchange, or reseller has knowledge that (1) the ticket purchased is counterfeit or (2) the ticket fails to conform to the description as advertised or represented to the purchaser by the seller; or
- the event for which the ticket was purchased is canceled.

### *Prohibition on Restriction of Resales*

Subject to restrictions imposed by a ticket issuer in accordance with the bill, a person may not prohibit or restrict the transfer or resale of a ticket that was made available to the general public for purchase unless (1) the person clearly and conspicuously discloses to the consumer the terms and conditions of transferability and (2) the consumer acknowledges receipt of the disclosure before final purchase of the ticket.

A person may (1) establish, maintain, and enforce restrictions concerning conduct, behavior, age, or public health or safety at a venue or an event and (2) set limits on the quantity of tickets an individual may purchase.

### *Additional Compliance Requirements*

A ticket issuer and a secondary ticket exchange must take commercially and technologically feasible steps to implement and maintain technology designed to prevent a machine, device, computer program, or computer software (with or without human assistance) from bypassing restrictions designed to limit the number of tickets that can be purchased on a primary or secondary ticket exchange.

**Current Law:** A “resale” is the second or subsequent sale of a ticket. A “reseller” is a person who offers a ticket for resale. A “ticket” means physical, electronic, or other evidence that grants the possessor permission to enter a place of entertainment for one or more events at a specified date and time.

A “secondary ticket exchange” means an electronic marketplace that enables a person to sell, purchase, and resell tickets. A “ticket issuer” means a person that, directly or indirectly, issues initial tickets for an entertainment event.

A “speculative ticket” is a ticket that is not in the actual or constructive possession of the reseller at the time of sale, advertisement, or listing. A speculative ticket includes a ticket sold by a reseller that, at the time of resale, is not (1) in the physical possession of the reseller; (2) owned by the reseller; or (3) under contract to be transferred to the reseller.

The listing for a ticket (and each step of a transaction to purchase a ticket) must (1) clearly and conspicuously disclose the total price of the ticket, including all fees and taxes other than shipping costs that are not determinable at a step in the transaction; (2) provide an itemized listing of all charges that comprise the total price of the ticket, including all fees and taxes; and (3) identify the seat number and zone or section of the ticket, to the extent applicable to the seat and venue.

The total price of a ticket may be increased in a noninitial step of a transaction by the amount of reasonable shipping costs for physically delivered tickets. The shipping costs may vary with the purchaser's location relative to the shipment's location of origin and the delivery method selected by the purchaser. The total price of the ticket, including all fees, taxes, and shipping costs, must be clearly and conspicuously disclosed prior to final purchase of the ticket. These requirements apply only to secondary ticket exchanges, ticket issuers, and resellers.

A reseller may not sell or offer to sell speculative tickets.

A secondary ticket exchange may not provide a marketplace for the sale or resale of a ticket that violates these provisions.

A ticket issuer, secondary ticket exchange, or reseller who directly engages in a sales transaction with a purchaser for the purchase of a ticket must provide the purchaser with a full refund of the total amount paid (including the price of the ticket and any fees and taxes), if (1) the ticket purchased is counterfeit; (2) the event for which the ticket is purchased is canceled; or (3) the ticket fails to conform to the description as advertised or represented to the purchaser by the seller.

**State Expenditures:** Because the bill establishes a new program to regulate ticket sales and resales, OAG requires additional staff to carry out the new functions. Thus, general fund expenditures increase by \$258,629 in fiscal 2027, which accounts for the bill's October 1, 2026 effective date. This estimate reflects the cost of hiring one program administrator and one administrative aide to manage the new registration program and one assistant Attorney General to take enforcement actions. It includes salaries, fringe benefits, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses.

Positions	3.0
Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$231,207
Operating Expenses	<u>27,422</u>
<b>Total FY 2027 State Expenditures</b>	<b>\$258,629</b>

Future year expenditures reflect full salaries with annual increases and employee turnover as well as annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

**Small Business Effect:** Small businesses that engage in ticket sales or resales are subject to additional requirements under the bill (including the requirement to register with OAG annually and obtain and maintain a surety bond, among other requirements) and may be meaningfully affected by the bill's requirements.

**Additional Comments:** Chapter 456 of 2024 required OAG to conduct a review of the event ticket market in the State. The [report](#) determined that there is no consensus between ticket resellers and the original sellers on any of the issues OAG was asked to review, including factors affecting ticket prices, whether the resale market hurts or helps consumers, how prevalent bots are, and what legislative changes, if any, might be appropriate.

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## Additional Information

**Recent Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

**Designated Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Office of the Attorney General (Consumer Protection Division); Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 8, 2026  
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