



Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and members of the committee,

The [National Independent Venue Association](#), or NIVA, submits this testimony in support of House Bill MD77 with amendments. NIVA is the national trade association representing thousands of independent live entertainment venues, festivals, promoters, performing arts centers, and nonprofit stages across the country, including a strong and diverse independent live sector here in Maryland.

We want to begin by thanking the bill sponsor for taking up ticketing reform and for engaging seriously with the harms facing fans, artists, and local venues. In particular, we strongly appreciate the sponsor's leadership in advancing a resale price cap. This is a meaningful and necessary policy tool and one that fans, artists, and venues across the country have been calling for.

Today's resale marketplace is not transparent or fair. Fans do everything right and still cannot access tickets at face value. Shows sell out in seconds only to immediately reappear on resale sites at extreme markups. Families are forced into the secondary market and priced out of live events entirely. These markups do not support artists, venues, or local workers. They are siphoned out of state and extracted for profit.

In Maryland, the stakes are high. According to NIVA's State of Live research, Maryland's independently owned and operated live entertainment industry drives \$744.3 million in state GDP, \$1.4 billion in economic output, and \$76.7 million in tax revenue each year, supporting 10,487 jobs and \$423.9 million in annual wages. When tickets are resold at extreme markups by third-party scalpers, that money does not circulate through Maryland's economy or support the workers and small businesses that make live events possible.

Resale price caps are gaining momentum nationwide because they work. Maine has already enacted a resale cap. Bipartisan legislation advancing resale price caps has been introduced or advanced in Delaware, Hawaii, Oklahoma, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and West Virginia, with multiple bills in Wisconsin alone. Internationally, governments in the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, and Australia have acted to limit resale markups and fees to protect fans and preserve access to live entertainment. Artists across genres and political parties have publicly supported these policies because they keep live events accessible and fair.

For these reasons, NIVA strongly supports the resale price cap *concept* in HB MD77 and we believe it can be a powerful consumer protection if drafted clearly and precisely. **However, NIVA's support for HB MD77 is expressly conditional on amendments.** As drafted, the bill would not yet deliver the consumer protections it is intended to advance.

The resale price cap language must be clarified and tightened to ensure it applies consistently in practice. In its current form, the structure risks allowing resale transactions to fall outside the

cap altogether, undermining the core purpose of the provision. In addition, while we appreciate the sponsor's attention to speculative ticketing, Maryland has already enacted a strong and effective ban, and any new language must meet or exceed that existing standard without reopening loopholes for deceptive contracts that perpetuate the sale of fake tickets, which the current draft does.

Accordingly, NIVA's support is conditioned on the following amendments:

- Maintain a clear, outright ban on speculative ticketing, with no ambiguity or carve-outs that would allow the sale of fake or non-existent tickets.
- Apply the resale price cap uniformly across the resale market, holding both individual scalpers and large, multibillion-dollar resale platforms to the same clear standard and protecting fans from price gouging, fake tickets, and deceptive practices.

NIVA has worked on ticketing reform in legislatures across the country and would welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource here in Maryland. We believe HB MD77 can be an important step forward if amended to deliver a clear, enforceable resale price cap that protects fans, supports local businesses, and strengthens Maryland's live entertainment ecosystem.

Thank you for your time and for your thoughtful consideration.