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On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Commerce and Consumer Protection
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3167

Hello,

In 2021, when venues were allowed to reopen and host events at a limited capacity, with lowered admission, fans were told that the limited capacity required a higher admission cost in order for the venue to operate. This came with the promise that ticket prices would lower again after full capacity was allowed. This never happened, and instead, cost of admission has only risen, so high that I and many people I have spoken to can no longer justify the cost of attending. When a base price ticket for a single headliner starts at \$79, and then fees are added, the cost for one person to see a single band perform is over \$100 (example taken from current and recent events at McMenamins Edgefield). The same bands at the same venue cost about half of that, and often less, for a single admission. This ballooning cost has made attending shows much harder and I rarely can afford to see them anymore, even though I have a salary over \$60,000. The cost does not reflect the experience being offered, since within the venue, drink and food costs have also risen exorbitantly, and there have been no improvements to the fan experience for GA admission tickets. On top of this, for many popular events, the tickets sell out within a few minutes of being posted (no longer specifying Edgefield, but all venues). I have personally called the ticketing agents and confirmed that the show was sold out. Almost immediately afterwards, I found tickets for those same shows available for resale, at much higher prices. This seems to me like solid evidence of scalpers taking advantage of popular shows, and it also heavily implies the use of bots to do so, since the ticketing sites are set up to hold tickets in a cart for 5-10minutes and it is unlikely that most shows would sell out in under 5 minutes using that method, were all of the buyers actually planning on attending.

This practice of scalping, as well as outrageous pricing (and being openly lied to by venue management), has prevented me from attending many shows that I would have otherwise been able to. It is unfair for the venues to allow this to continue happening, and if they are aware of it and actively choosing not to address it, then I hold them partially at fault as well.

I support the prohibition of bots and similar software to purchase tickets for resale, and I support the prohibition of ticket scalping, otherwise known as purposefully purchasing tickets for the express purpose of resale for profit.