

Submitter: Devon Lawson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4024

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Devon Lawson. I am testifying in strong support of HB 4024.

I approach this from an analysis of economic utility. A healthy economy distinguishes between those who create value and those who merely extract it. Speculative ticket selling is the definition of extraction.

In any other industry, selling a product you do not possess and have no contract to acquire is called fraud. If a real estate agent sold a house they didn't list, or a car dealer sold a truck they didn't have, we would shut them down. Speculative ticketing is not "innovation"; it is a deceptive practice in which a middleman gambles with consumers' money. They list a "phantom ticket" at a high price, wait for a desperate fan to pay, and then try to buy a real ticket at a lower price to pocket the difference. If they fail, the consumer is left stranded. We should support our legitimate Oregon businesses, the venues and promoters in Bend, Medford, and Portland who are asking for this bill, rather than protecting the "right" of out-of-state scalpers to run a bait-and-switch scheme.

For the working class, leisure is a necessity, not a luxury. It is how we recharge. When a worker saves their wages to see a concert, and a speculator inserts themselves into the transaction, that speculator is imposing a private tax. The speculator adds zero utility. They do not manage the venue, perform the music, or secure the safety of the crowd. They exist solely to inflate the price. By passing HB 4024, we are eliminating a parasitic layer of the economy that drains the disposable income of working families.

This practice is essentially "short selling" applied to family entertainment. It creates market volatility and price inflation that benefits no one but the gambler. It is time to regulate this market and demand that, if you sell a good, you actually have it.

HB 4024 restores a basic rule of commerce. Goods must exist to be sold. It protects the artist, the venue, and the fan from predatory rent-seeking.

I urge a "Yes" vote.

Thank you.