

House Bill 1658 Hearing

September 7, 2023

House Consumer Protection, Technology, and Utilities Committee
Pennsylvania House of Representatives
Harrisburg, PA 17120

My name is Willie “Prophet” Stiggers and I am co-founder and board member of the Black Music Action Coalition. I am here today representing BMAC and a coalition of music artist advocacy organizations to express our collective and strong support of HB 1658.

I want to thank you all for hearing from the artists. There are lots of people discussing concert tickets and music fans. No one knows and appreciates music fans, more than the artists. We represent the artists. They work very hard – with the venues - to provide the best live experiences to as many of their fans as possible.

Unregulated scalpers and the secondary platforms do not care about the artists or the fans. In fact, they prey on fans. One of the most harmful practices is speculative ticketing. When resellers list tickets they have not yet obtained, they are betting (or speculating) that they will be able to get the tickets and then resell them to fans. All too often they will advertise tickets before any have even gone on sale. They will then use bots to procure large amounts of tickets when on sale does occur - boxing out real fans from buying the tickets at face value.

Consumers are falsely led to believe they are purchasing a valid ticket. Once a speculative ticket is sold, the reseller can cancel the order if they are unable to procure the ticket or if it is no longer profitable to complete the transaction – leaving the fan without a ticket, sometimes the day-of the event.

Artists and fans have a special relationship. Having fans dupped into thinking they have an actual ticket and realizing it never existed is not the experience an artist wants for fans who spend their hard-earned money to come to their show. Consumers do not benefit from the practice of speculative ticketing in any way – the practice only benefits resale platforms who turn a blind eye in the name of profit.

HB 1658 cleans up the ticketing ecosystem by simply requiring resellers have possession of a ticket before listing it for sale – fans will be able to purchase tickets with confidence.

Thank you for taking the time to listen. On behalf of artists and their fans, I ask you to please support HB 1658 and protect Pennsylvania consumers from this deceptive practice so they can enjoy their favorite live events without getting scammed.