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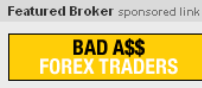
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Bill seeks transparency in ticket resale market

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By [Ray Waddell](#)

NASHVILLE (Billboard) - Efforts to rein in the freewheeling secondary ticket market could soon come to a head on Capitol Hill.

The concert industry is awaiting further details about legislation that Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., plans to introduce that would impose a 48-hour waiting period after a concert on-sale before a ticket reseller can buy those tickets to put on the secondary market.

Schumer revealed his plans on the heels of an e-mail that Ticketmaster sent earlier this month to broker clients of its secondary ticket division, TicketsNow, advising them that the company had received subpoenas and requests for sworn information about its clients from the Department of Justice, Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the New Jersey attorney general's office and Canada's Competition Bureau.

Schumer's Senate bill wouldn't outlaw ticket reselling. When ticket buyers need to sell their own tickets, or they want to attend an event and are willing to pay more not to be part of the initial on-sale, reselling is acceptable, according to a statement from Schumer's office.

Rather, the aim of the bill is to make ticketing more transparent and give the public a fair shot at tickets. Schumer's legislation would require ticket resellers to register with the FTC and post their registration number on all brokerage Web sites, in an attempt to prevent fraudulent, anonymous sales. Venues may buy back tickets from ticket-holders without obtaining a registration number.

Ticketmaster Entertainment CEO Irving Azoff said in a statement that he is "very happy to support Sen. Schumer's thoughtful proposal and leadership on this issue." Ticketmaster declined to comment beyond Azoff's prepared remarks, but given the recent public scrutiny of the secondary ticket market, particularly in the wake of Ticketmaster's merger agreement with Live Nation, enhanced transparency in the ticketing market would seem to benefit the company.

REQUIREMENTS WELCOME

Chris Tsakalakis, president of secondary ticket market leader StubHub, and Don Vaccaro, CEO of the secondary ticket aggregator TicketNetwork.com, said they believe brokers would welcome the registration requirement.

"Brokers would absolutely be for the federal registration number," Vaccaro said. "The only thing they'd want is that primary sellers should get it, fan clubs should get it, artists should get it, promoters should get it as well. Anybody that sells a ticket should get it. Everybody would gain if everybody had to be registered."

Given how quickly tickets for hot shows sell on the primary market, the 48-hour waiting period will feel like an eternity for resellers. But the fact that many consumers can't or won't get caught up in the mad online rush of public on-sales has contributed to the success of StubHub and other resellers. Many in the industry see today's broad on-sale methods going the way of the dinosaur.

"The value we provide the consumer is giving them a wider time frame in which to buy tickets and also the ability to pick exactly where they want to sit," Tsakalakis said.

Schumer couldn't be reached for comment, but a representative said the bill also will affect the primary market by, for example, requiring that all paper and e-tickets include on their face the date and time of sale.

Schumer's bill wouldn't apply to season ticket-holders for entertainment events or purchasers of a package of tickets for multiple events that are part of the same entertainment series. A secondary seller could purchase those tickets once they are listed for sale by the ticket-holder, subject to state and local laws and regulations.

Tsakalakis said he looks forward to working with Schumer and other legislators on a "fan-friendly" bill.

"The question of when tickets are made available on general on-sale," he said, "how many are being made available and where the rest of the tickets go, that to me is where true transparency comes in."

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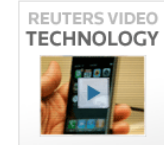
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