

Protect Maine's Live Performance Community – Ban Third-Party Ticket Sellers

Maine's live performance scene is a cornerstone of our cultural identity, offering connection, inspiration, and belonging. From intimate theatres to stunning concert halls, the arts provide connection, inspiration, and a sense of belonging to people of all ages and backgrounds. But this vital industry is under threat from a growing problem that undermines both artists and audiences: third-party ticket sellers. We urge Maine to act and put an end to this harmful practice.

The Problem

Quite simply, a third-party ticket seller is a scalper or ticket broker who buys up tickets, often using automated "bots," as soon as they are released and then re-sells them at exorbitant prices, sometimes pushing them hundreds of dollars above face value. Fans pay more and some are priced out entirely. To make matters worse, some of these fraudsters are creating websites that mimic the original venues site and customers are unknowingly overpaying for worthless, fake tickets. This hurts audiences and undermines local venues, which rely on fair pricing and direct patron engagement. This practice isn't just unfair—it's unsustainable.

The Impact

The repercussions of ticket resale issues are felt most acutely by working families, students, and Maine's vibrant arts community. Many of us cannot afford the high prices that are now standard on resale platforms. Families who want to take their children to see a concert or theater show can no longer do so without breaking the bank. Similarly, students who depend on affordable tickets to enjoy the arts are being shut out of experiences that should be accessible to everyone.

Moreover, the economic and social impacts extend beyond individual ticket buyers. When tickets are resold at inflated prices, the economic benefits are not staying within Maine. Profits that should be reinvested into local venues, local performers, and local communities are instead funneled out of state or even out of the country. The damage to Maine's creative ecosystem is profound. As more shows sell out at unreasonably high prices, fewer Mainers can afford to engage with their own cultural heritage, and the reputation of our respected theatres and performance spaces suffers.

The Solution

Maine does not have to accept this exploitation of its arts community. Other states, including New York and Illinois, have enacted laws to curb predatory ticket resales by requiring tickets be sold only through authorized channels. Maine must do the same by banning unauthorized resale platforms. This action would keep tickets accessible at fair prices, and profits where they belong: with the artists and venues that make live performance possible.

Take Action

The Maine Performing Arts Leadership Alliance urges you to protect yourselves against the fraudulent behavior of these ticket scammers.

- Only buy tickets from the official website or authorized box office of the venue you wish to attend.
- If you think the price of a ticket seems outrageous, call the venue's box office to confirm actual ticket prices.
- Contact your legislators to demand laws that protect consumers from predatory ticket sales and fraudulent practices.

It's time for our state to take a stand and preserve the heart of Maine's live performance scene for generations to come. Together, we can ensure fair ticketing and keep Maine's arts scene accessible and thriving for everyone.

The Performing Arts Leadership Alliance (PALA)

PALA is a coalition of 20 Maine-based non-profit performing arts organizations, each with budgets over \$500,000. Committed to artistic excellence, they employ professional artists, maintain paid staff, and produce live performances that enrich Maine's cultural landscape.

Founded in 2020 in response to COVID-19, PALA remains a key forum for collaboration, advocacy, and policy-sharing. Members independently produce full seasons, serving as cultural and economic pillars in their communities.

Through advocacy, partnerships, and innovation, PALA strengthens the arts sector, ensuring its lasting impact on Maine's economy and quality of life. United by the belief that "we are all stronger together," PALA champions the arts as a vital force for community and economic growth.

PALA Participant Organizations: Bangor Symphony, Maine State Music Theatre, Ogunquit Playhouse, Opera Maine, Penobscot Theatre, Portland Ovations, Portland Stage, Portland Symphony, The Public Theatre, Sanford Performing Arts Center, Theatre of Monmouth, Collins Center