



Written
Testimony

Submitted

By

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General Law Committee Public Hearing
February 24, 2011

Co-Chairs, Ranking Members and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me to submit written testimony today on H.B. 6298, An Act Concerning the Fair Sale of Tickets to Entertainment Events.

While the University of Connecticut supports giving consumers flexibility in the use of their tickets, we are concerned that this bill will have unintended consequences that could significantly impact how our Division of Athletics allocates game tickets, severely limit the general student body's participation in our intercollegiate athletic events, and impact the ability of important University constituencies to attend UConn games. The legislation could also reduce UConn ticket sales that play a significant role in funding all of the intercollegiate sports programs at the University which receive no state support.

We realize that the secondary market is an active part of the entertainment industry ticket landscape today, but this bill does not uphold consumer protection and rights associated with licensed or authorized ticket re-sellers. By promoting ticket re-selling in any fashion, without restriction, this legislation could cultivate huge price mark-ups on tickets to Connecticut athletic and entertainment events and foster an uncontrolled market of ticket re-sellers.

Preserving Important University Constituencies' Access to Tickets

Section 2 (e) which requires that no greater than five percent of all available tickets be withheld for purchase from the general public as written does not address the unique needs that exist at any college institution which sponsors an intercollegiate athletics program.

In addition to existing contractual obligations for tickets, there are several constituent groups that regularly receive tickets for UConn events, including, but not limited to, UConn students, student-athlete families, visiting teams, and prospective student-athletes and their families. For example, the University has historically set aside a large block of seats at our home venues for our students. Also, there are certain games each year when former teams are brought back to campus and honored for recognition and development purposes, or when the university invites children from local schools or non-profit organizations to attend games as part of its outreach program.

Will Call Concerns

At UConn, our goal is to put purchased tickets into the hands of consumers as quickly as possible after the sale and we are concerned that section 2(f), which requires ticket sellers to offer an option to pick up tickets, will negatively impact our customer service. Our goal is to have as few tickets at "Will Call" as possible to minimize any lines at "Will Call" on game days. In general, "Will Call" is only utilized when tickets are purchased close to game day, to avoid the risk of the purchaser not receiving the tickets by mail in time for the event. When tickets are ordered well in advance, it is our experience that consumers want to get the tickets in hand as soon as possible. If "Will Call" is an option for every purchase, this provision could have the unintended consequence of increasing the number of tickets at "Will Call", which would possibly create longer lines and delay arena entry.

UConn Athletics presently operates in a manner consistent with Section 2(d) as "Will Call" is only utilized when tickets are ordered within 5-7 business days of the event. The "Will Call" pick-up is a means to protect the purchaser and avoid a situation where mailed tickets don't arrive in time prior to the event. A ticket purchaser who orders within a week of the game may also opt to pick up the tickets at the UConn Athletic Ticket Office in advance of game day during normal business hours.

Paperless Ticketing Concerns

Section 2, regarding a paperless ticketing system does not affect UConn Athletics today, but we expect that the University and most other entertainment venues will likely be utilizing paperless ticketing in the future. The paperless system, which requires the buyer to swipe a form of identification to complete the sale and gain event admission, is meant to confine ticket use to the exact original ticket buyer only and for the exact price paid by that original buyer. While it might not give consumers some freedoms related to the tickets, it does help to prevent re-selling at exorbitant prices.

In conclusion, the University is concerned that this legislation may negatively impact how the Division of Athletics provides access to intercollegiate athletic events and reduce ticket revenue which directly funds our numerous intercollegiate sports programs at the University.

Thank you for providing us with an opportunity to submit written testimony and for your continued support of the University of Connecticut.