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Testimony of Jim Koplik,  
President of Live Nation Connecticut and Upstate New York

Raised SB 149: An Act Concerning An Exemption from the Admissions Tax  
from Events at the Oakdale Theatre.

Senator Fonfara, Representative Berger and Members of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding  
Committee:

I am Jim Koplik of Stamford, Connecticut, President of Live Nation Connecticut and Upstate  
New York. Live Nation owns and operates the Oakdale Theatre in Wallingford, Connecticut.

I have been presenting concerts in Connecticut for 45 years. Live Nation acquired the Oakdale  
Theatre in 1998, after it had undergone a major expansion which substantially enlarged and  
modernized the venue. That project was funded in part by a tax increment financing bond from the  
State of Connecticut; which recognized the admissions tax as the source of payment to the State which  
qualified the project for funding.

Every other Connecticut theater including The Bushnell, The Warner Theatre, The Shubert, and  
The Stamford Palace are all exempt from the admissions tax. The two arenas the XL Center and  
Webster Bank Arena are also exempt. Similarly, Foxwoods Theatre and Mohegan Sun Arena are not  
subject to the admissions tax. The admissions tax liability of the Oakdale results in a significant  
disadvantage in attracting and promoting artists and events. Additionally, these other venues receive  
substantial State grant funding which results in a virtual subsidy to operating expenses, from which  
Oakdale does not currently benefit.

Prior to the TIF bond financing, Oakdale also had been admissions tax exempt. In fact, the  
admissions tax was imposed to qualify the Theatre for the TIF grant. Subsequently, the tax increment  
financing to the Oakdale was paid down and retired in December, 2015. Accordingly, the admissions  
tax is no longer applicable as recognition for the tax increment financing bond. It is inequitable to  
continue to expose the Oakdale Theatre to the economic disadvantage which results from the  
imposition and collection of the Connecticut admissions tax. It is also contrary to the interests of the  
State and the Town of Wallingford. The Oakdale Theatre should be treated as other Connecticut  
theaters and arenas – admissions tax exempt, thereby eliminating the competitive disadvantage which  
results in significant loss of revenue to the Theatre and to the Wallingford economy.

To demonstrate the economic impact of the Oakdale Theatre to the Town of Wallingford and  
the State of Connecticut, I have attached a schedule which details the value of the presentation of  
Oakdale events.

This inequitable and discriminatory tax treatment of the Oakdale Theatre threatens its very  
existence. Now that the tax increment financing obligation at the Oakdale has been retired, it must be  
afforded equivalent admissions tax exempt status. To conclude, it is only just and equitable to restore  
Oakdale Theatre to the tax exempt status it enjoyed prior to the TIF funding.

# Oakdale Theatre

## Estimated Economic Impact From Venue Operations

The direct economic impact from venue operations estimated for the Oakdale theater is \$4m annually.

	Full Time	Part Time	Total
<b>Employees (total)</b>	14	379	393
Wallingford Residents	3	70	73
<b>Salaries (total)</b>	\$609,214	\$485,463	\$1,094,677
Wallingford Residents	\$228,725	\$153,669	\$382,394
<b>State &amp; City Taxes/Permits</b>			\$895,560
Sales & Use Tax			\$19,457
Employer Payroll Tax			\$244,730
Property			\$4,647
Permits			\$1,164,394
<b>Total State &amp; City Tax/Permits</b>			\$361,490
<b>Utilities (Electricity, Gas, Water)</b>			\$273,524
Payees include Wallingford Electric/Water/Sewer, Spark Energy, Yankee Gas			\$338,140
<b>Other</b>			\$112,904
Show Advertising/Promotional			\$466,114
Repairs & Maintenance			\$23,673
Cleaning & Trash Removal			\$63,412
Special Events/Equipment Rentals			\$1,277,767
Security & Ambulance			
Other (Supplies, Print, Sponsor, Travel)			
<b>Total Other</b>			\$3,843,886
<b>Grand Total</b>			
			Live Nation

## Oakdale Theatre

### Estimated Economic Impact From Fans Attending Events

The direct economic impact from fans attending events is estimated for the Oakdale theater is \$9m annually.

	# of Attendees	# of Attendees	Average Spending
Attendees	100%	160,000	\$77.52
Attendees Who Used Paid Transportation	3.5%	5,600	\$1.85
Attendees Who Rented a Car	.5%	800	\$0.17
Attendees Who Spent on Ancillaries Outside the Venue	76%	120,800	\$70.50
Attendees Paid Transportation Spending		\$10,360	
Attendees Rental Spending		\$136	
Attendees Ancillary Spending		\$8,516,400	
Total Attendees Spending		\$9,224,544	

\*Ancillaries include: Dining, groceries, souvenirs, gas, service and other non-food shopping.

Live Nation Research collects data from respondents by sending an email invite to ticket purchasers 3 days after the event has played and asking them to complete an online survey. Data was collected in 2014 for the estimates used here.