

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF

Robert J Ritchie / Kid Rock

U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and  
Transportation's  
Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Technology,  
and Data Privacy

*Fees rolled on All Summer Long: Examining the live  
entertainment industry*

January 29th 2026

Good afternoon. Thank you Senator Blackburn and committee members for this opportunity.

My name is Robert Ritchie aka Kid Rock. I'm proud to say I have been packing arenas, amphitheaters and stadiums with the greatest fans on earth for over 25 years.

I am also a capitalist.

I'm here today because I love God, I love this country, I love live music and sports, and I believe music fans and artists have been getting screwed for far too long by the ticketing system.

I'm in a unique position to testify because unlike most of my peers I am beholden to no one.

No record label.

No manager.

No corporate endorsements or deals.

To put it plainly, I ain't scared to speak out on these issues like many artists, managers and agents are.

I'm also not here for personal gain. I'm here because hard working Americans who love live music deserve better, and because artists deserve control over their own work.

And let's be clear—this is FAR from a new problem.

Thirty years ago, members of the rock band Pearl Jam sat in these same seats, warning Congress about ticketing abuse.

In 2009, Congress was told—under oath—that merging Live Nation and Ticketmaster would benefit artists and fans.

The CEO of Live Nation called the merger an “experiment” and promised it would increase competition, empower artists, and lower costs. He also said, and I quote “a system that empowers artists benefits everyone.”

The CEO of Ticketmaster also testified in 2009 and said

“We believe the combination of our two companies will benefit artists, fans, theater, sports teams, museums and all the other facilities, performers and spectators who use our services.” ..... “The economic foundation that supported artists in the past is crumbling. Piracy is threatening their livelihood. **Secondary ticketing is driving up prices for the fans with absolutely no benefit to the artist.**”

Needless to say, that experiment has failed miserably.

Independent venues have been crushed.

Artists have lost leverage.

Fans are paying more than ever—and getting blamed for it.

Should Ticketmaster and Live Nation be broke up?  
Probably.

Would that alone fix things? I’m not sure it would.

But I am sure of this: no artist should be forced to sell their tickets without a say in who sells them and how they are sold.

What other business in America doesn’t control or have a say in its own inventory?

If artists had real choice, real competition would follow. And tickets would end up in the hands of real fans—at the prices the artists set.

*Its no secret this industry is full of greedy snakes and scoundrels. Too many suits lining their pockets off talent they never had and fans they mislead.*

The truth is, much of this could have been or will be solved through technology—especially proof-of-humanity tools. It hasn't happened yet because there's just too much money in the secondary ticket market.

Ticketing companies didn't fail to stop this—it seems they chose not too.

Meanwhile, this problem has been addressed with much success over seas.

In parts of Europe, resale ticket prices are capped. And it seems to be working. I've been advocating for a 10% cap here in the States, and in fairness, Ticketmaster and Live Nation have supported a cap on the resale of a ticket. Where I'm confused is I don't think Ticketmaster needs a law passed to do this? If that's true, than it only proves these companies have been reactive, not proactive.

I would employ Congress to subpoena the contracts and deals between the artists / promoters / buildings / ticketing companies/ agencies and vendors because as I understand it, you will find mountains of fraud and abuse.

My position and solutions are as follows:

- 1: Artists should control who sells their tickets and HOW.
- 2: Resale ticket price caps work and protect real fans.
- 3: The Bots Act should be enforced, brokers and bad actors must be stopped and all should face serious penalties and consequences

All-in pricing is great but it doesn't fix the system.

Outlawing speculative ticketing is obvious. **The problem** is that ticketing lobbyists push these reforms as cover—**while fighting to keep tickets in an ‘open market’ that lets them exploit fans under the guise of capitalism.** Don’t be fooled by these tactics.

Congress and many others have been fooled since the mid 90's.

Fooled again in 2009, so on and so forth.

This wasn't an experiment—it was a monopoly dressed up as innovation.

So I'll close now with the words of one of my favorite rock bands, The Who: and say it is my sincere hope

**“We won’t get fooled again.”**

Thank you and Rock on.