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**ROB BONTA**

*Attorney General*

# Attorney General Bonta Files Lawsuit Against Live Nation, Ticketmaster

Press Release / *Attorney General Bonta Files Lawsuit Against Live Nation, Ti...*

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**OAKLAND** — California Attorney General Rob Bonta today, alongside the U.S. Department of Justice (U.S. DOJ), and a bipartisan coalition of 30 attorneys general, filed a lawsuit against Live Nation, the parent company of Ticketmaster, alleging unlawful conduct that has hampered competition in the ticketing and promotions of live music concerts. Live Nation's strong domination over ticketing and promotions markets has allowed it to engage in a wide variety of anticompetitive behaviors.

"As the fifth largest economy in the world, California knows that vigorous competition is essential to a well-functioning economy," **said Attorney General Bonta.** "Live Nation imposed its dominance of the live concert industry by manipulating the marketplace — sending ripples of economic injustice throughout our state. While this illegal conduct benefits Live Nation's bottom line — it hurts artists, their fans, and our

economy. This lawsuit sends a clear message: Here in California, we're committed to protecting consumers, holding industry accountable, enforcing antitrust laws, and ensuring a fair and competitive market."

The lawsuit alleges Live Nation violated Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Antitrust Act, which prohibits anticompetitive agreements, monopolization, and attempted monopolization. Monopolization offenses occur when a single firm maintains a monopoly unlawfully, by using its control of the market to exclude rivals and harm competition. In addition, the complaint alleges violation of California's Unfair Competition Law.

The complaint filed today alleges that Live Nation protects its monopoly by using both exclusive contracts with promoters and venues to protect its dominant position in the live music industry to force artists and venues to use both its ticketing and concert promotion services. Live Nation uses their market dominance to leverage its power over all other aspects of the live music entertainment industry: from artist management, to ticketing, and promotions. For example, Live Nation has used their dominance in promotions to force venues to use Ticketmaster's ticketing services, thereby blocking innovation and unfairly competing with competitors in the music concert business.

In the lawsuit, Attorney General Bonta, U.S. DOJ, and coalition states allege that Live Nation has:

- **Harmed fans through higher fees.** Fans' ticketing experience — from buying a ticket to showtime — is also worse than it would be if the industry was competitive.
- **Maintained its monopoly in ticketing markets** by locking up venues through restrictive long-term, exclusive agreements and threats that venues will lose access to Live Nation-controlled tours and artists if they sign with a rival ticketer.

- **Leveraged its extensive network** of venues to force artists to select Live Nation as a promoter instead of its rivals, maintaining its promotions monopoly.

The lawsuit asks the court to restore competition in the live entertainment industry by:

- Prohibiting Live Nation from engaging in its anticompetitive practices.
- Ordering Live Nation to divest Ticketmaster.
- Securing financial compensation for California, as well as for fans who were overcharged by Live Nation, leading them to pay more than they would have in a competitive market for tickets.

In filing the lawsuit, Attorney General Bonta joins the U.S. Department of Justice and the attorneys general of Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming, and the District of Columbia.

Attorney General Bonta is committed to enforcing anticompetitive laws to ensure fair prices, innovation, and consumer choice.

In March, Attorney General Bonta, alongside U.S. DOJ, and a coalition attorneys general, filed a lawsuit challenging Apple's anticompetitive behavior related to iPhone smartphones. The lawsuit alleges Apple deliberately made it more difficult for third-party apps and products to operate with the iPhone, resulting in higher prices for consumers and harm to competition in the smartphone industry. In February, Attorney General Bonta, the Federal Trade Commission, and a bipartisan coalition of states, announced filing a lawsuit that challenges the proposed merger of Kroger and Albertsons; this merger presents a significant risk of reduced competition and higher food prices nationwide. In December 2023, Attorney General Bonta announced a \$700 million multistate settlement with Google resolving allegations that the company violated state

and federal laws by monopolizing the Android smartphone application market. In November 2023, Attorney General Bonta and three other attorneys general announced joining U.S. DOJ's lawsuit against Agri Stats, Inc., a company that organizes and manages anticompetitive information exchanges for meat processors and facilitated the unlawful increase of chicken, pork, and turkey prices across the U.S.

A copy of the complaint is available [here](#).

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