
**Technology & Economic Development
Committee**

HB 1091

Brief Description: Concerning the unauthorized interference of ticket sales over the internet.

Sponsors: Representatives Van De Wege, Klippert, Carlyle, Fey, Goodman, Tarleton, Holy, Gregerson, Jinkins, Lytton, Stanford, Orwall, Kirby, Fitzgibbon, Sawyer, Ryu, Riccelli and Morris; by request of Attorney General.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Establishes the use or sale of software to interfere with or disrupt the operation of ticket sales over the Internet as an unfair or deceptive act under the Washington Consumer Protection Act.

Hearing Date: 1/21/15

Staff: Nikkole Hughes (786-7156).

Background:

Ticket Web Robots.

Ticket bots or web robots are software programs used to interfere with or disrupt the operation of ticket sales over the Internet or to buy up a substantial portion of the available tickets for later private resale. Interference by ticket bots includes gaining unauthorized priority access to purchasing tickets and reducing access of the general public to online ticket sales at the intended, original price. Commonly affected ticket sales include those for concerts, sporting events, and other entertainment events.

Consumer Protection Act.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Washington Consumer Protection Act (CPA) declares that unfair and deceptive practices in trade or commerce are illegal. The CPA allows a person injured by an unfair or deceptive practice to bring a private cause of action for damages. The Office of the Attorney General may investigate and prosecute claims under the CPA on behalf of the state or individuals in the state.

Under the CPA, "person" includes natural persons, corporations, trusts, unincorporated associations, and partnerships.

Summary of Bill:

A person may not use or sell software to circumvent, thwart, interfere with, or evade access controls or security measures on a ticket seller's Internet web site. A "ticket seller" is a person that makes admission tickets available at an initial presale or sale to the general public, either directly or indirectly.

The use or sale of software to interfere with or disrupt the operation of ticket sales over the Internet is found to be an unfair or deceptive act in trade or commerce and an unfair method of competition for the purposes of applying the CPA.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.