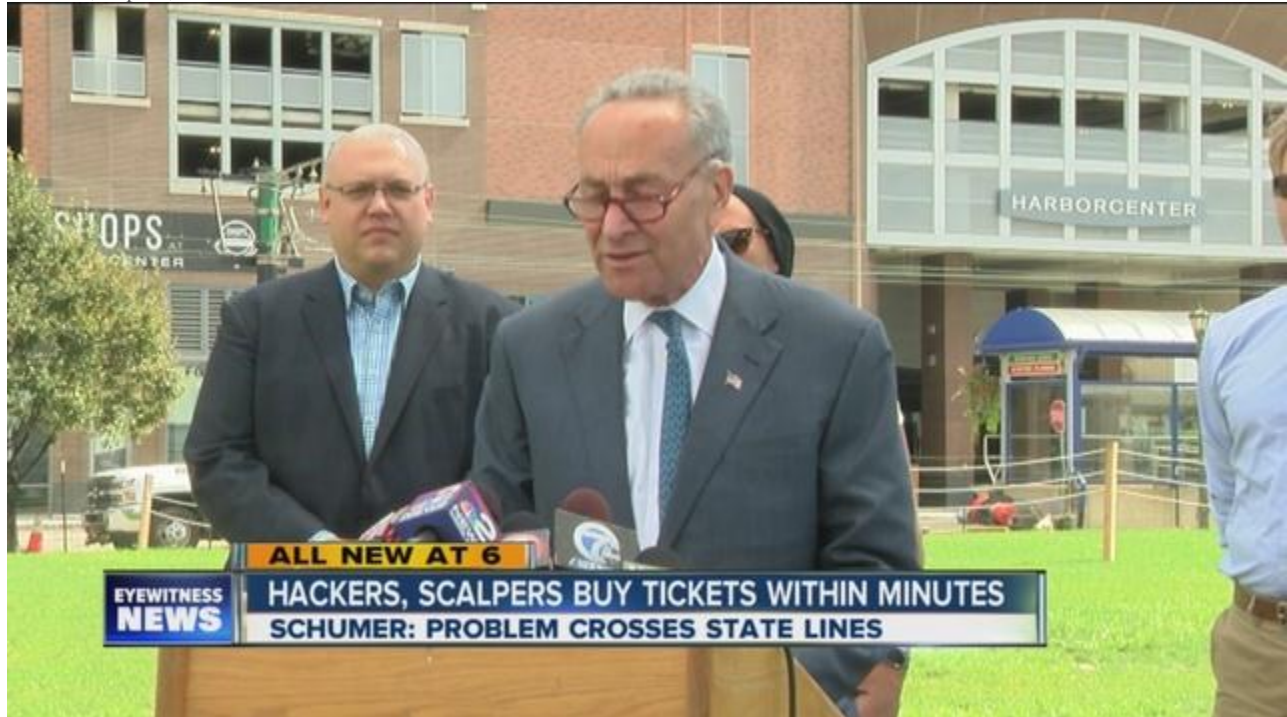


Rapid sellout of McCartney tickets sparks new legislation

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BUFFALO, N.Y. (WKBW) - Western New Yorkers who tried to get Paul McCartney tickets but could not now have a reason.

Cyber scalpers used specialized software known as "bots" to buy virtually every ticket. It happened so fast, Congress is now taking action.

The tickets for the highly hyped show at First Niagara Center sold out in just three minutes. Scalpers and online hackers who used bots are now re-selling the tickets at sky-high prices. Schumer says new technology means software is able to trick systems that venues and legitimate ticket sellers use to keep bots out.

"Fans needed to be faster than a computer," said Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY).

Schumer announced that he is introducing new legislation to the Senate that would make software acting as bots illegal. In addition, anyone selling tickets knowingly bought by bots would face a fine of \$1,000 per ticket.

The senator says a similar version of the Bots Act has also been introduced into the House of Representatives. He says both bills have bipartisan support.

"What this will do is stop the bots and online ticket sellers in their tracks," Schumer explained. "They sell a thousand tickets illegally - that's a million dollar fine. They're not making that much money."

The most expensive Paul McCartney tickets now go up to \$8,000. Artists say bots hurt venues big and small.

"Either only the wealthiest can afford the tickets or people have to scrape together so much money to go to these shows, that they're not able to afford other concerts," explained Todd Knuzik, with the Arts Services Initiative of WNY.

The FBI is investigating bots and cyber scalpers. However, law enforcement says federal legislation is needed.

Schumer adds that venues such as First Niagara Center and legitimate ticket sellers want to help get rid of and circumvent cyber scalpers. However, even with this help and legislation there is one big problem. Many bots are run overseas, namely in Russia, where U.S. law is not applicable.

<http://www.wkbw.com/news/rapid-sellout-of-mccartney-tickets-sparks-new-legislation>