

February 24, 2006

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate

The Honorable John Conyers
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
US House of Representatives

The Honorable Arlen Specter
Ranking Member, Committee on the
Judiciary
United States Senate

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Ranking Member, Committee on the
Judiciary
US House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Leahy, Chairman Conyers, Ranking Member Specter and Ranking Member Smith:

I'm writing today in support of the proposed Ticketmaster Entertainment/Live Nation merger.

Music has always been a part of my life – even long before my brother and I started Van Halen in 1972. As a kid, I took piano and drum lessons, and then eventually picked up the guitar when I was a teenager – and I haven't put it down since. I practiced tirelessly to perfect my craft, and am one of the few fortunate ones who can say they make their living from being a musician.

My 17-year old son, Wolfgang, joined the band a couple of years ago as our bassist. To have my son follow in my footsteps on his own, without me pushing him into it, is the greatest feeling in the world. Aside from how the merger could help me and my band, Wolfie and his future in this industry is really the reason why I'm in favor of these two trusted companies coming together.

There are so many problems facing the music industry today. Van Halen succeeded based on our record sales and the many tours that we did to increase our record sales. But that business model just doesn't work anymore. Today, the majority of artists earn their living from playing live. What my son – and any future band he plays in – needs are new and innovative approaches to the problems facing the live entertainment industry. And I believe that the merger of Ticketmaster/Live Nation is one of those solutions.

If this deal helps brings our fans closer to the band, with more direct access to merchandise, new music we write, and other promotions we do, it's going to ensure that Wolfie and I have a future in music. And not just us, but all the other musicians trying to make their dream a reality in this economy.

Our fans have been our biggest supporters, and anything that brings us closer to them is a good thing. The synergy of these two companies can make that happen.

Respectfully,


Eddie Van Halen

