



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Daniel L. Squadron

## Cardinal Dolan, State Senator Squadron, Assemblymember Cusick, U.s. Senator Schumer Condemn Profiteering on Tickets for Pope Francis Visit

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### **Leaders Call on Websites and Individuals to Reject Reselling**

#### *Legislators Highlight Continued Push to Prohibit Profiteering Practice*

NEW YORK – Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York, State Senator Daniel Squadron, and Assemblymember Michael Cusick, and U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer today condemned reported reselling of tickets for Pope Francis' New York visit. The Archdiocese of New York, in partnership with the New York City Administration, have offered thousands of free tickets for Pope Francis' historic visit later this month.

According to news reports, ticket reselling began Friday after thousands won free ticket lotteries for Pope Francis' Central Park Procession. Tickets for the procession have reportedly been listed for sale for hundreds of dollars on sites including eBay and Craigslist. As of Sunday morning, multiple ticket listings were found.

Squadron and Cusick highlighted state legislation (S571) they have long pushed that would prohibit the practice of reselling tickets for more than their face value for charity or not-for-profit events.

“Tickets for events with Pope Francis are distributed free for a reason – to enable as many New Yorkers as possible, including those of modest means, to be able to participate in the Holy Father’s visit to New York,” said **Cardinal Dolan**. “To attempt to resell the tickets and profit from his time in New York goes against everything Pope Francis stands for.”

"Pope Francis' visit to the city is a chance for us to reflect on our values, not jump on the Internet to sell devotion to the highest bidder," said **State Senator Daniel Squadron**. "It's disappointing people would exploit this historic occasion to profiteer, in direct conflict with the message of this spiritual world leader. In the wake of this most recent, appalling display, I call on my colleagues to join me in saying enough is enough, and put an end to legal profiteering off of charity and not-for-profit events, as our bill does. I thank Cardinal Dolan, Assemblymember Cusick, Senator Schumer, and my colleagues for their continued support."

"As New York prepares for Pope Francis' historic visit, it is repugnant that ticket resellers and the websites they are listed on have taken this as an opportunity to make a quick buck," said **Assemblymember Michael Cusick**. "Profiting off of events during the Papal visit is in direct contradiction to his message of compassion and care for all, and this practice should end immediately. I am proud to join with Senator Squadron, Cardinal Dolan, and my colleagues who have supported this bill in renewing our push for the reselling of tickets for charity and not for profit events to end once and for all."

"To think that any winner who received one of the lottery tickets to see the Pope would seek to make a fast buck off of the opportunity is really gut wrenching. I know I stand with the Church and the Diocese locally in denouncing any efforts to sell these tickets online. My message to anyone thinking about doing that is to look deep into your heart. If you have a ticket you can't use, do the right thing and let the office who gave it to you know. I know eBay has recently banned the sale of Pope tickets on its site and I am asking other online marketplace sellers, like Craigslist, to do the same. I'm hopeful they will heed the call," said **U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer**.

Ticket reselling for the Papal visit marks another high-profile instance of charity or not-for-profit tickets being resold on secondary sites for many times their face value in recent years. For example, the concert event 12/12/12 raised money for the Robin Hood Foundation's Hurricane Sandy recovery efforts. The show sold out in minutes and resellers posted tickets at prices up to \$6,500. Billy Joel performed a charity concert to benefit Long Island Cares in 2013, where tickets were resold online for up to \$4,000. On May 28 of this year, the MusiCares MAP Fund held a benefit concert, headlined by Billy Idol and Joan Jett, and tickets were resold for over of \$1,250.

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