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# State AGs Reject Federal Live Nation Deal and Press Ahead

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State attorneys general (AGs) from across the political spectrum have refused to join the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) midtrial settlement with Live Nation. The bipartisan multistate coalition vowed to "keep fighting this case without the federal government," underscoring that state AGs are increasingly prepared to part with the DOJ and take the lead in complex enforcement actions.

**DOJ Reaches a Mid-Trial Settlement With Live Nation**

On May 23, 2024, the DOJ and a coalition of state AGs jointly filed an antitrust suit against Live Nation and its wholly owned subsidiary, Ticketmaster, alleging monopolization and anticompetitive conduct driving up ticket prices in live entertainment markets. Days into trial, the DOJ announced a settlement with Live Nation that would impose structural relief and establish a $280 million settlement fund to compensate the multistate coalition. Notably, it has been publicly reported that the settlement terms were negotiated behind closed doors and without meaningful state AG involvement.

**The States Move Forward Undeterred**

Rather than follow the DOJ's lead, a bipartisan state coalition publicly rejected the deal as inadequate. According to New York AG Letitia James, the proposed DOJ settlement "fails to address the monopoly at the center of this case, and would benefit Live Nation at the expense of consumers."

More than two dozen states and the District of Columbia remain in the case, including at least seven Republican?led states. Two days after the DOJ settlement was announced, the states engaged prominent outside antitrust counsel, Jeffrey Kessler of Winston & Strawn LLP, to represent the multistate coalition. The decision to bring in Winston & Strawn reflects a broader pattern of state AGs frequently partnering with private counsel and devoting substantial resources to pursue complex, multiyear matters on their own terms.

The court scheduled a status hearing for March 13, 2026, at 3 p.m. to address potential resolution discussions and trial logistics. The Troutman Pepper Locke State Attorneys General Team will continue to monitor material developments in the case.

**Why It Matters**

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For companies facing federal and state scrutiny, Live Nation is another clear signal that state AGs no longer see themselves as “second fiddle” to federal enforcers. Bipartisan coalitions of AGs, often backed by seasoned outside counsel, are increasingly willing to break from their federal counterparts and drive national enforcement through multistate actions, as seen in the recent challenges involving social media platforms and opioid manufacturers. Businesses in highly regulated or concentrated markets should plan for parallel — but not always aligned — federal and state enforcement paths, potentially lengthening timelines, complicating resolution strategies, and elevating overall risk.

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