

Opinion

## Letter: Bed-tax dollars don't go to arena

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August 12, 2018

This letter corrects several myths in Bret Adams' Thursday letter about ticket tax plans and Nationwide Arena. Here are the facts that everyone should consider:

- Bed-tax dollars have never been used to operate or support Nationwide Arena.
- Our community's Downtown arena was built with private dollars but has been publicly owned since 2012.
- The naming rights for our Downtown arena were purchased by, and not given to, Nationwide Insurance.
- Ticket taxes paid by fans attending events at Nationwide Arena will be used to improve the arena and will benefit fans and enhance their sports events, concerts and performance experiences.
- An improved Nationwide Arena will be a more-attractive venue for those considering attending events in Columbus, thus contributing to increased spending by out-of-town guests and our local economy.
- More than 60 other sports, arts-and-culture and entertainment venues and programs in Columbus would benefit from the proposed ticket tax. Many already get support from the Greater Columbus Arts Council, but need more help to sustain themselves.
- More than 64 cities in Ohio and nearly all other cities that regularly compete with Columbus for sporting events, concerts and performances already rely on ticket taxes.
- Like other user fees, ticket taxes will come from those who attend and benefit from ready access to events held in Columbus.

***Sally Bloomfield, chair, Franklin County Convention Facilities Authority Board, Columbus***

# The Columbus Dispatch

## Opinion

## Letter: More funding of arts will help city thrive

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August 12, 2018

I respond to the Thursday letter “Popular events would be hurt by tax plan” from Bret Adams. Arts and cultural offerings, as well as professional sports and entertainment attractions are a vital part of the thriving economy in Columbus. These not only provide exciting stimulation, they also serve as an economic-development driver and help attract and retain the creative class that is needed for the new economy.

Hundreds of millions of dollars of economic activity, thousands of jobs and the attraction of thousands of visitors to Columbus are all attributable to these offerings; however, these areas are dramatically underfunded. A study conducted a few years ago indicated that Columbus is near the bottom of 15 peer cities in per capita support of the arts. In addition, Nationwide Arena, which was built for a fraction of the cost of similar venues in other cities, is badly in need of critical repairs.

Several options were considered to provide additional funding for the arts, sports and entertainment sectors in Columbus and the ticket fee was the one collaboratively agreed upon to keep these and our economy working. This concept is nothing new — numerous other cities in Ohio and around the country have ticket fees for entertainment and sports events. To maintain the momentum that has made Columbus one of the greatest cities in the country, we need to properly fund these essential segments of our community.

***Mark Corna, Powell***