



dr. phillips center

FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

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Thursday, August 8, 2019

U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing to express my opposition to changes in the Antitrust Consent Decrees that currently regulate the Performing Rights Organizations (PROs), including Broadcast Music Inc. (BMI) and the American Society of Composers Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), since the early 1940s.

The termination of the Consent Decrees would allow the PROs to significantly increase rates without any judicial or DOJ oversight. It would also allow them to charge different fees to similar presenters. It would give the PROs the ability to decline licenses, in effect giving the PROs control over which acts are available to specific communities nationwide. This is contrary to free market and will deprive certain populations and markets while unfairly rewarding others.

BMI is currently in Rate Court requesting the addition to their licensing fees of ancillary incomes from hospitality and other services that are unrelated to the performance of music and art. These additional fees will deprive Performing Arts Centers and artist groups much needed income.

Without judicial oversight under the Consent Decrees the door is open for PROs to pursue other claims. We strongly voice our opinion that the Consent Decrees must remain in place.

Best,

Katherine Ramsberger  
President & CEO

Cc: Cecilia Kelly