



RIALTO
SQUARE
THEATRE

August 9, 2019

The Honorable Makan Delrahim
Assistant Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice Antitrust Division
950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, D. C. 20530

Dear Assistant Attorney General:

I am writing to urge the Antitrust Division to preserve the consent decrees governing the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP and Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI)).

As a Performing Arts Center that is a vital part of our community, I fear that termination of the consent decree would jeopardize the licensing system that makes it possible for us to bring the performing arts and popular entertainment to the citizens that we serve annually, which is well over 75,000. And additionally would impact the jobs of not only the venue employees but the local restaurants, bars and other establishments that benefit from our events.

With the recent changes in how we experience music, more and more people are having access thereby resulting in record high revenues for songwriters, lyricist and composers due to the protections built into the consent decrees. I have concerns about the trickle down ramifications on the music industry. Everything from allowing anticompetitive collective licensing practices that have the potential to cause tremendous confusion for those of us forced to see music licensing to the promise of exorbitant rate increases. In addition, noncompliance, that may really have been unintentional, will be met with claims for rights infringements that could be business ending for some of us.

While we can agree that the current system is not perfect, the elimination by the DOJ prior to having something else in place prior would be even worse. With involvement from the proper players (composers, lyricists and songwriters working with the entertainment and hospitality industry), I am certain that a solid plan can be developed that will make the change well thought out and keep the industry on solid footing for all concerned.

Thank you for taking time to read this and I urge the Department of Justice to leave the consent decree in place.

Sincerely,

Valerie Devine, Executive Director

Rialto Square Theatre *Will County Metropolitan Exposition and Auditorium Authority*

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