

From: Rick Taylor <rtay[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, August 8, 2019 11:15 AM
To: ATR-LitIII-Information (ATR) <ATR.LitIII.Information@ATR.USDOJ.gov>
Subject: BMI ASCAP Consent Decree Input

As an operator of public assembly venues, I am writing to express my opposition to any changes in the Antitrust Consent Decrees that currently regulated Performing Rights Organizations (PROs), such as Broadcast Music Inc. (BMI) and the American Society of Composers Authors and Publishers (ASCAP).

I support the right of creators and artists to be compensated for their work and the performance of their work, but it must be reasonable. The initial changes presented already by BMI are unrealistic and gratuitous.

The termination of the Consent Decrees would allow the PROs to significantly increase rates without any judicial or DOJ oversight. It would also allow PROs to mandate different fees to similar venues and presenters. It would even give PROs the ability to decline licenses thus controlling what we may present based on their own decision-making rather than what is of interest to the local market.

This level of control in our market, would cause us to discontinue programs effectively hurting the artists and producers rather than helping them. The limited amount of competition in the PRO industry creates a monopoly effect on the users.

As noted above, BMI is even now presenting additions to their licensing fees to include percentages on food and beverage and other services that have nothing to do with the creation or performance of music and art. As such, with such limited competition in this area, I believe the Consent Decrees should remain in place.

Kind regards,

Rick Taylor

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*Lake Terrace Convention Center ~ Historic Saenger Theater
African American Military History Museum at the Historic USO Club
Historic Eureka School Museum ~ Oseola McCarty House Museum
Sixth Street Museum District ~ Hattiesburg Zoo*

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