

**From:** Anna Emerson <AEmerson [REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 7, 2019 6:24 PM  
**To:** ATR-LitIII-Information (ATR) <ATR.LitIII.Information@ATR.USDOJ.gov>  
**Subject:** Keep Consent Decrees in Place

*Good evening!*

*I am a Customer Service Representative with Ruth Eckerd Hall in Clearwater, Fla., and have been made aware that the Performing Rights Organizations (PRO) BMI and ASCAP have requested that the U.S. Department of Justice end the Antitrust Consent Decrees which have regulated both BMI and ASCAP since the early 1940s. I believe that ending these Consent Decrees would be significantly detrimental to the viability of cultural institutions as well as to the entertainment industry as a whole.*

*The termination of the Consent Decrees would allow PROs to increase rates without any judicial oversight, thereby allowing differing license fees from presenter to presenter. Termination would also adversely affect cultural an institution's ability to decline a license and therefore ultimately maintain discretion regarding which artists can be hired. In effect, a monopoly on the industry would be created.*

*The intent of the termination is to demand higher royalty fees and force access to revenue streams such as food sales, parking fees, program ads, etc., which are **unrelated** to both the creation and performance of the art or music. Our arts organization relies heavily on these other sources of revenue to remain viable, to keep prices accessible to our community and beyond, and to reinvest back into the local community with educational programming.*

*Ruth Eckerd Hall plays a large role in our state - having an economic impact of \$9.1M - and is only one of hundreds of such arts institutions employing thousands of people across the country and serving millions of citizens. We are well-respected in our community, and our symbiotic relationship which has been nurtured over the years is based on mutual trust, transparency, and a commitment to both the arts and the community we serve. We will all lose if the PROs are granted their request.*

*I ask you to advocate on our community's behalf to maintain judicial oversight by allowing the current Consent Decrees to remain intact.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*~ Anna Emerson  
CSR, Ticket Office*

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