

From: The Red Butlers [mailto:theredbut Redacted]
Sent: Friday, November 20, 2015 7:22 AM
To: ATR-LT3-ASCAP-BMI-Decree-Review
Subject: Antitrust Consent Decree Review - ASCAP and BMI 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

This is in response to the recent litigation proposal in having members of Performance Rights Organizations (PROs) ASCAP and BMI only be able to work with other songwriters within their own PRO in order to collect due royalties with co-writes of songs.

This seems to be another attempt for the government to control the arts and culture of our society, and has hints of actions similar to what Nazi Germany did to its artists and musicians during the 1930s and 40s. Performance royalties are wages, just like wages earned by an electrician, policeman, nurse, or any other worker. To limit how a songwriter can write is like telling someone that they are limited to the places where they can work. This wrecks of violations with Equal Opportunity Employment.

Each songwriter is his/her own business. To limit access to their opportunities is like telling GM that they cannot do any business ventures with Ford or Chrysler. That would be a violation of Fair Trade.

If such a measure were passed, what next? Limit artists what materials they can use, where they can perform, or what type of music format they can perform? Will this lead to other limitations on other arts, such as actors only being able to work with certain directors and movie studios? Limitations of painters and sculptors on what museums they can display?

The ideas may seem far-fetched now, but what does the future hold if such laws pass and songwriters are limited to with whom they can work? Songwriters and PROs have a difficult enough time as it is securing earned royalties due to non-reporting venues and radio stations, as well as record companies who hold funds in their bank accounts until legal action is taken.

Please consider leaving the current structure as-is regarding co-writes with different PROs. To limit access is to limit creativity and put a muzzle on artistic freedom that in no way violates another's freedom.

Respectfully,

Mitch Matthews (aka Matt Merta)

"Money can buy you a fine dog, but only love can make him wag his tail." - Kinky Friedman