

From: Rachel Blanton <rachblan [REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, August 5, 2014 1:52 PM
To: ATR-LT3-ASCAP-BMI-Decree-Review <ASCAP-BMI-Decree-Review@ATR.USDOJ.GOV>
Subject: Songwriter's consent decree

Attn: Department of Justice

I am an American songwriter who is trying to make a serious attempt at writing for a living. My Name is JD Michaels and I released my first album of original music last year. My second release is slated for September of this year. I have learned a lot in the last year regarding copyrights, royalties and the consent decree that has been in place since 1941. I am a member of ASCAP and have received very little in royalties for all my efforts. It is downright embarrassing to receive a royalty check for 17 cents. Artists are now forced to charge exorbitant amount of money for live performances which I cannot do because I simply don't have the a name recognition and the power of a music conglomerate behind me. In essence what I am saying is that the way the current laws are set up, they favor big corporations over the little guy who is trying to make a meager living. I'm submitting this comment on my own behalf in opposition to the ASCAP and BMI consent decrees. I believe these government actions essentially are a compulsory license outside of the Congress and take away songwriters' rights to due process of law. Another issue I have with the laws in place are that there is really no place to go to voice opposition to what I feel are unfair laws in place that limit artists' compensation.

In conclusion, I just wanted to voice my concern and my sincere opinion that the current consent decree pushes the aspiring artist to the wayside while favoring big corporations who do not have the artists' best interest in mind; nor do they have any commitment to furthering what is truly creative art. Big corporations often trade music of cultural importance for commercially lucrative music that lacks any kind of cultural substance. Please decide in favor of the aspiring songwriters of America. Our musical heritage (and my livelihood) depend on it.

Sincerely,

JD Michaels

Sent from Windows Mail