

Deborah Dugan files new charges that cite an attempt to influence Grammy nominations

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In her ongoing legal battle against the Recording Academy, recently fired Grammys CEO Deborah Dugan has presented documentation in an effort to support her January 21 claim of voting irregularities and unethical bias in the award show's nomination process. Per The Wrap, Dugan filed an email she and interim CEO Harvey Mason Jr. received from Grammys producer Ken Ehrlich. According to her, the message was Ehrlich's attempt "to press the Academy into nominating a song by a particular superstar in order to increase his ability to convince the superstar to perform at the Grammys." Below is the redacted excerpt, which does not name the "superstar" in question:

“(L)ooking at the AMA nominations this morning, it’s more about who’s NOT there than who is....and [superstar] is definitely not gonna be happy,” the email begins. “I think there’s a case to be made to [superstar] that a performance of [song] from [album] on our show, should it be nominated . . . and that a blowout performance of that song, which IS a Grammy song, might . . . So, should there be some discussion in a certain room at your meetings next week for Record, Album and Song, and if it involves making a choice between [one album] vs. [a second album], my thought from knowing [superstar] since [superstar] was a child, is that [superstar] might see the wisdom of a [] performance [of a song from the second album] . . . I’m jus sayin.”

The Wrap also notes that Dugan cited a message she received from an unidentified, Grammy-winning jazz artist who expressed concerns with actively competing artist being a part of the nominee selection process:

“I am a Grammy Award winning artist . . . there is one thing in the process that has conflicted me for a while and I want to share it with you. In the Best Jazz Vocal category I know for a fact that artists who have recordings up for awards in a given year, are still a part of the selecting committee for that year. I understand these folks must excuse themselves and leave the room when their recordings are up for voting, but minutes later they are back in the room with the same folks.”

This most recent development connects with serious issues that Dugan raised days before the ceremony aired, when she was suddenly removed from the organization for unspecified misconduct and what was noted by The New York Times as a “bullying” managerial style. Dugan’s suit also alleges organization-wide discrimination, sexual harassment from former

board member Joel Katz, and retaliation from the Recording Academy after reporting the behavior to HR. As of now, the organization has not released a statement responding to Dugan's latest filing.