

PHILADELPHIA DESERVES ANSWERS:

Who Decided Macklemore Could Not Perform at Lincoln Financial Field?

An Open Letter to the Philadelphia Eagles, Eagles Stadium Operator LLC, Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development, City of Philadelphia, and Lincoln Financial Group

As a concerned citizen, I am writing to seek transparency regarding the decision that resulted in artist Macklemore being removed from the September 19 Ed Sheeran concert at Lincoln Financial Field following his public expressions of solidarity with Palestinians.

This is about more than one artist or one concert. It raises serious questions about **free expression, public accountability, and whether advocacy for Palestinian human rights can become grounds for exclusion from a major venue operating on publicly owned property.**

What We Know

Messina Touring Group, promoter of Ed Sheeran's U.S. tour, has stated that venues on upcoming tour dates informed the promoter that they would not allow concerts to proceed with Macklemore on the lineup.

Lincoln Financial Field was reportedly one of those venues.

Macklemore has alleged that New England Patriots owner Robert Kraft—who has acknowledged barring Macklemore from performing at Gillette Stadium—encouraged other stadium owners to take similar action. Whether and to what extent outside parties influenced the Philadelphia decision remains unknown.

That is precisely why transparency is necessary.

Lincoln Financial Field Is Not Simply a Privately Owned Venue

The public deserves to understand the unusual structure governing Lincoln Financial Field:

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

The City owns the underlying stadium land and played a central role in the public financing and development of the facility.

PHILADELPHIA AUTHORITY FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (PAID)

PAID is a central party in the stadium's ownership, financing, and lease structure.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES / EAGLES STADIUM OPERATOR LLC

The Eagles lease and operate Lincoln Financial Field and exercise substantial operational and commercial control over events at the stadium.

LINCOLN FINANCIAL GROUP

Lincoln Financial Group is the stadium's naming-rights partner. It does not own Lincoln Financial Field.

This public-private structure makes accountability especially important.

We, the people, Are Seeking Answers

If Lincoln Financial Field informed the tour promoter that the September 19 concert could not proceed with Macklemore on the lineup, **who made or authorized that decision?**

We respectfully call upon the Philadelphia Eagles and Eagles Stadium Operator LLC to disclose:

1. Who made or authorized the decision that Macklemore could not perform at Lincoln Financial Field?

2. Did Robert Kraft, the Kraft Group, representatives of other NFL franchises, advocacy organizations, sponsors, donors, or other outside parties communicate with the Eagles or stadium management regarding Macklemore's appearance?

3. Did Macklemore's advocacy concerning Palestine play any role in the decision to exclude him?

4. What contractual provision, stadium policy, safety consideration, or other standard was invoked to justify the decision?

5. Were the City of Philadelphia, PAID, Lincoln Financial Group, Messina Touring Group, or other stakeholders consulted or notified before the decision was made?

We further call upon **the City of Philadelphia and PAID** to review the circumstances surrounding this decision and clarify what protections, obligations, and public-interest standards apply to events held at this publicly owned property.

We ask **Lincoln Financial Group** to clarify whether it was consulted about, participated in, or otherwise supported the decision made by the stadium bearing its name.

This Is Bigger Than One Artist

People are free to agree or disagree with Macklemore's views. They are free to criticize his words or protest his appearance.

But answering speech with speech is different from using institutional power to exclude an artist because of a political viewpoint.

At a moment of intense national debate over Palestine, Israel, U.S. foreign policy, and the boundaries of political expression, we should be especially concerned about any precedent in which advocacy for Palestinian freedom results in exclusion from major civic spaces.

Lincoln Financial Field stands on publicly owned Philadelphia land. Public resources helped make the stadium possible. The public therefore has a legitimate interest in understanding who exercises this power and how it was used.

We are not asking anyone to agree with Macklemore.

We are asking for transparency.

Who made the decision?

Who applied pressure?

What communications took place?

And what policy justified it?

Philadelphia deserves answers.