

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 10, 2026

The Honorable Kwame Raoul
Attorney General of Illinois
115 S. LaSalle St.
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Attorney General Raoul:

Thank you for your continued leadership in defending the rights of Illinoisians and all Americans. As Members of Congress from Illinois, we write with grave concern about the proposed merger between Paramount and Warner Bros. Discovery. This deal would harm Illinois' workers, consumers, and small businesses, and may violate longstanding antitrust precedent.

As you know, Illinois benefits from a vibrant, robust, and competitive entertainment industry. Film production has a significant impact on Illinois' economy, supporting 18,000 jobs and about \$703 million in spending in 2025.¹ Moreover, every dollar spent on a night at the movies adds an additional \$1.50 into our local communities, driving spending to businesses including local bars, restaurants, and independent shops.²

We are concerned that the proposed merger could jeopardize jobs in Illinois by seriously diminishing both Paramount and Warner Bros.' production and purchase of new content. Both companies have sprawling and competing portfolios of film and television studios, video streaming services, news channels, and media rights for major sporting events. In an already concentrated industry, this deal would combine two of the few vertically integrated movie studios into a new dominant studio and media conglomerate, eliminating head-to-head competition in a highly concentrated market and leading to reduced output, higher prices for consumers, and diminished diversity in American storytelling and newsgathering.³

Historically, these studio mergers have been accompanied by mass layoffs and a significant reduction in production, which can lead to fewer jobs for the creative community, fewer productions for local theaters to play, and fewer choices for families at the movies. The most recent merger of major film and television studios – Disney's 2019 acquisition of 21st Century Fox – was followed by Disney cancelling more than 200 Fox films that were in development, reducing the film output from the combined firm, laying off over 3,000 workers, and placing much of Fox's vast film and television library exclusively on the Disney+ streaming

¹ Press Release, Illinois Office of the Governor, Gov. Pritzker Announces Illinois Breaks Film Industry Record with \$703 Million in Expenditures (Mar. 19, 2026), <https://www.illinois.gov/news/release.html?releaseid=32310>.

² BEACON ECONOMICS, 2023 ECONOMIC & FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS OF THE UNITED STATES MOVIE THEATRE INDUSTRY (2023), <https://cinemaunited.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2023-Beacon-Economics-Impact-Report.pdf>.

³ WGA, BROKEN PROMISES: MEDIA MEGA-MERGERS AND THE CASE FOR ANTITRUST REFORM (2021), https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/news_and_events/public_policy/broken-promises-merger-report.pdf.

service.⁴ That is why we believe statements made by Paramount executives, including a promise to fire thousands of workers in pursuit of “efficiencies” if this merger is consummated, should be taken seriously.⁵

The stakes are even higher now that the U.S. Department of Justice has failed to adequately protect Illinois residents by rubber-stamping this mega-merger before career staff who were leaning toward recommending a lawsuit had an opportunity to object.⁶ With significant opposition from key stakeholders and questions of political corruption and foreign ownership looming over this proposed merger, there is a dire need for an objective and independent review.⁷

We are heartened by reports that certain states, including California, where both Paramount and Warner Brothers have significant operations, are actively scrutinizing potentially anticompetitive elements of this merger. While we recognize that state attorneys general do not have the capacity to take on all of the antitrust work historically led by the U.S. Department of Justice, we hope you lend whatever support you can provide to this investigation and potential challenge if you determine the deal is illegal, consistent with your critical efforts on other antitrust and consumer protection issues.⁸

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

⁴ Kevin Kelleher, *As Disney Lays off 3,000 Workers Post-Merger, Fox Corp. Gives Every Employee Stock Bonuses*, Yahoo Finance (March 21, 2019), <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/disney-lays-off-3-000-233416463.html>; FandomWire, *Disney Canceled Over 200 Films Fox Had in Development* (October 5, 2019), <https://fandomwire.com/20th-century-fox-properties-that-disney-has-cancelled/>.

⁵ Alex Sherman & Lillian Rizzo, *WBD Employees Fear Coming Wave of Job Losses as Paramount Tops Netflix's Bid to Acquire Company*, CNBC (Feb. 27, 2026) <https://www.cnbc.com/2026/02/27/warner-bros-employees-paramount.html>; Joe Flint, Brian Schwartz and Natalie Andrews, *Behind Paramount's Relentless Campaign to Woo Warner Discovery and President Trump*, Wall Street Journal (Dec. 8, 2025), <https://www.wsj.com/business/media/paramount-netflix-warner-bros-battle-ellisons-a86fe15c>.

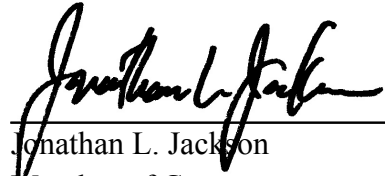
⁶ David Folkenflik and Elissa Nadworny, *DOJ approves Paramount Skydance's \$111 billion acquisition of Warner Bros. Discovery*, NPR (June 13, 2026), <https://www.npr.org/2026/06/13/nx-s1-5856558/doj-approves-paramount-skydances-111-billion-acquisition-of-warner-bros-discovery>; Dave Michaels, Dana Mattioli, Sadie Gurman and Jessica Toonkel, *Justice Department Decision to Allow Paramount Deal Surprised Staff Investigators*, Wall Street Journal (June 15, 2026), <https://www.wsj.com/business/media/justice-department-decision-to-allow-paramount-deal-surprised-staff-investigators-a18f70da>.

⁷ Katie Kilkenny, *Emotions Spill Over at Town Hall of Industry Workers Opposed to Paramount-WBD Merger: "It's the Death of a Great American Industry"*, The Hollywood Reporter (June 6, 2026), <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-news/entertainment-workers-oppose-paramount-wbd-merger-town-hall-1236615502/>; Michael Sozan and Andrew Miller, *Paramount's Anticompetitive Merger With Warner Bros. Is Fueled by Investments From Regimes With Deep Trump Ties*, Center for American Progress (June 2, 2026), <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/paramounts-anticompetitive-merger-with-warner-bros-is-fueled-by-investments-from-regimes-with-deep-trump-ties/>; Letter from Ranking Members Raskin and Pallone to David Ellison (May 12, 2026), <https://democrats-judiciary.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/democrats-judiciary.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/2026-05-12-raskin-pallone-to-ellison-paramount-skydance-re-warner-bros.pdf>.

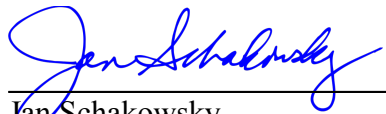
⁸ Office of Attorney General Kwame Raoul, *Milestones Report: Protecting Consumers*, <https://s3.amazonaws.com/pub-attachments/10bab82e-ca8b-4c2f-94d5-31642ab0368b.pdf>.



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



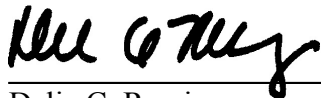
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