

Resolution N°. 3

July 29, 2019

Subject: *Resolution in support of legislation to help Multi-Employer Pension Funds*

Butch Lewis Act Resolution

Whereas, Beginning in the early 2000s, economic conditions in the United States contributed to a wide-scale drop in the assets of multi-employer pension funds, including the American Federation of Musicians and Employers' Pension Fund ("AFM-EPF"); and

Whereas, Many member orchestras of the Regional Orchestra Players' Association ("ROPA") participate in the AFM-EPF; and

Whereas, Many musicians in ROPA orchestras rely on the AFM-EPF's solvency for retirement; and

Whereas, Congress enacted the Multi-employer Pension Reform Act ("MPRA")¹ in 2014 in an attempt to provide relief to pension funds that were in trouble; and

Whereas, The AFM-EPF went into "Critical and Declining" status as of the start of the current fiscal year on April 1, 2019; and

Whereas, Under MPRA, a fund in Critical and Declining status can explore the option of reducing benefits in order to keep the fund solvent; and

Whereas, The Butch Lewis Act would provide alternative relief to the AFM-EPF in the form of Government loans, which could alleviate the need to reduce benefits; and

¹ More information on MPRA can be found at

https://www.uschamber.com/sites/default/files/multiemployer_report_-_chamber_-final.pdf

Whereas, The American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (“AFM”) has been actively involved in lobbying Congress to pass the Butch Lewis Act; and

Whereas, On July 24, 2019, the Butch Lewis Act, now titled the Rehabilitation for Multi-employer Pensions Act of 2019 (“RMPA”)², passed in the House of Representatives; and

Whereas, The RMPA is now going to a vote in the Senate, and Senators need to hear from constituents about the urgency of passing this bill; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) encourages its members to contact their Senators³ and express their support for legislation such as the RMPA which assists troubled Multi-employer Pension Funds; and, be it further

Resolved, That ROPA supports the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (“AFM”) in its efforts to lobby for the Butch Lewis Act, the RMPA, or any other similar legislation that protects the AFM-EPF and its beneficiaries.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board

² H.R. 397, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/397?r=15&s=5>

³ instructions for contacting senators will be forthcoming through a campaign from ICSOM via phone2action, or see <https://www.afm-epf.org/Participants/ContactCongress.aspx>