

Resolution N°. 11

July 29, 2026

Subject: *Supporting Fair, Timely, and Accessible Visa Processing for Professional Musicians*

Visa Resolution

Whereas, Music has long served as a universal language that fosters cultural understanding, artistic collaboration, and mutual respect around the world; and

Whereas, Professional orchestras, festivals, opera companies, educational institutions, and presenting organizations throughout the United States and Canada regularly engage internationally recognized artists whose performances enrich audiences, strengthen artistic excellence, and promote cultural exchange; and

Whereas, Many Regional Orchestra Players' Association ("ROPA") member orchestras collaborate with guest artists, conductors, soloists, composers, educators, and ensembles from around the world whose participation depends upon a functioning and reliable artist visa system; and

Whereas, Many ROPA member orchestras include professional musicians who lawfully reside and work in the United States through artist and employment-based visa programs, and these musicians are valued colleagues, bargaining unit members, educators, mentors, and long-term contributors whose artistry strengthens their orchestras and communities; and

Whereas, Recent years have seen substantial increases in visa processing delays, application costs, administrative uncertainty, and inconsistent adjudication for O and P artist visas, with standard processing times in many cases extending to ten months or longer and expedited processing frequently exceeding its published timelines; and

Whereas, The escalating costs associated with visa processing - including substantial premium processing fees that still do not guarantee timely adjudication - place significant financial burdens on orchestras, presenters, festivals, educational institutions, and artists alike; and

Whereas, Visa delays and denials have forced the cancellation or postponement of performances, tours, educational residencies, festivals, and artistic collaborations involving internationally-acclaimed musicians and ensembles, resulting in financial losses for presenting organizations and diminished artistic opportunities for audiences and musicians; and

Whereas, Increasing uncertainty surrounding visa processing has led many international artists and presenters to reconsider or forgo engagements in the United States altogether, reducing opportunities for artistic collaboration, cultural diplomacy, and the exchange of musical traditions; and

Whereas, Organizations including the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (“AFM”), the League of American Orchestras, the Association of Performing Arts Professionals, and numerous other arts organizations have advocated for reforms that would make artist visa processing more timely, transparent, reliable, and affordable while maintaining appropriate national security and immigration safeguards; and

Whereas, Professional musicians, regardless of nationality, benefit when lawful pathways for artistic exchange operate efficiently, predictably, and fairly, thereby strengthening orchestras, audiences, educational opportunities, and the broader performing arts ecosystem; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association (“ROPA”) affirms its strong support for international artistic collaboration and cultural exchange as essential components of a vibrant orchestral profession and healthy performing arts community; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA supports efforts to improve the efficiency, transparency, predictability, and affordability of artist visa processing for qualified professional musicians and performing artists while recognizing the importance of maintaining appropriate lawful security review; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA supports the advocacy efforts of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (“AFM”), the League of American Orchestras, the Association of Performing Arts Professionals, and other organizations working to improve artist visa policies and administrative procedures so that legitimate professional engagements may proceed without unnecessary delay, uncertainty, or excessive financial burden; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA stands in solidarity with professional musicians, orchestras, festivals, presenters, and arts organizations whose artistic work and livelihoods have been adversely affected by prolonged visa processing delays, inconsistent adjudication, or unnecessary administrative obstacles, and encourages continued collaboration among arts organizations to advance practical solutions that strengthen international cultural exchange.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board