

Resolution N°. 12

July 29, 2026

Subject: *Support for Small AFM Locals and Union Local Autonomy*

Small Locals Resolution

Whereas, Small locals of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (“AFM”) provide indispensable representation, advocacy, and support to professional musicians in their communities, many of which would otherwise have little or no meaningful union presence; and

Whereas, Officers of small locals frequently serve in volunteer or minimally compensated capacities while simultaneously maintaining active performing careers, administering local operations, negotiating agreements, organizing musicians, resolving workplace disputes, advocating before civic and labor organizations, and representing the AFM within their communities; and

Whereas, The effectiveness of a AFM local is not determined by its size but by the commitment, expertise, and dedication of its officers and members, and many small locals provide exemplary representation despite operating with limited financial and administrative resources; and

Whereas, Small locals possess unique institutional knowledge of their regional music industries, employers, labor markets, political environments, and community relationships that cannot easily be replicated through centralized administration, regionalization, or remote governance; and

Whereas, The challenges confronting small locals - including limited financial resources, geographic isolation, declining membership, succession planning, and the increasing administrative responsibilities placed upon local officers - are best addressed through expanded support, education, collaboration, and investment rather than through policies that diminish local autonomy, consolidate representation, or reduce local decision-making authority; and

Whereas, Strong AFM locals are essential to successful organizing, effective collective bargaining, labor-community partnerships, political advocacy, and the long-term growth of union membership throughout the Federation; and

Whereas, Small locals provide an essential local presence within their communities, building relationships with musicians, employers, labor councils, elected officials, educators, and community organizations in ways that cannot be effectively replaced through distant or centralized administration; and

Whereas, The continued vitality of small locals ensures that musicians in rural communities, smaller metropolitan areas, and underserved regions retain access to experienced local leadership that understands and responds to the unique needs of their communities; and

Whereas, The Regional Orchestra Players' Association ("ROPA") has long recognized that strong AFM locals strengthen orchestras, collective bargaining, professional musicians, and the labor movement as a whole; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players' Association ("ROPA") recognizes small locals within the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada ("AFM") as an essential component of a strong, diverse, and effective Federation and affirms their critical role in protecting professional musicians; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA supports preserving the autonomy, authority, and local decision-making capacity of AFM locals so that musicians may continue to be represented by leaders who possess firsthand knowledge of their communities, employers, and regional labor environments; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA encourages the AFM to continue to prioritize investments in officer education, leadership development, organizing assistance, administrative support, technological resources, mentorship programs, and financial assistance that strengthen the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of small locals; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA supports collaborative partnerships among AFM locals that encourage the voluntary sharing of knowledge, training, resources, and best practices while respecting the independence, governance, and unique needs of each local; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA encourages the AFM to continue developing programs, resources, and partnerships that empower small locals to organize effectively, cultivate leadership, expand member engagement, and meet the evolving needs of the musicians and communities they serve, thereby supporting the long-term health of the Federation.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board