

Resolution N°. 15

July 29, 2026

Subject: *Support for the Freelance Musicians' Association*

FMA Resolution

Whereas, The Freelance Musicians' Association ("FMA") is a new, officially recognized player conference of the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada ("AFM"), created to unite, support, and advocate for freelance and independent musicians; and

Whereas, The recognition of the FMA as an official AFM player conference represents the culmination of more than two decades of organizing, education, strategic planning, and grassroots activism by AFM officers, staff, and freelance musicians working collaboratively to strengthen representation for independent musicians; and

Whereas, Freelance and independent musicians comprise a substantial portion of the Federation's membership and contribute immeasurably to the artistic, educational, and cultural life of their communities through orchestral performances, chamber music, opera, musical theater, recording, club dates, touring, teaching, commercial music, film, television, and other professional engagements; and

Whereas, Many Regional Orchestra Players' Association ("ROPA") members also work extensively as freelance musicians, substitute musicians, extra musicians, recording artists, educators, and performers in a wide variety of musical settings outside their primary orchestra employment, making the work of the FMA directly relevant to their professional lives and economic security; and

Whereas, Freelance musicians often navigate unique professional challenges, including inconsistent employment, multiple employers, limited access to employer-provided health insurance and retirement benefits, immigration and visa concerns, artificial intelligence and digital media issues, inequitable compensation, workplace harassment and discrimination, and the absence of many of the workplace protections available under collective bargaining agreements; and

Whereas, Freelance musicians are often hired as substitute and extra musicians in ROPA orchestras, and frequently perform the same artistic work as contracted orchestra musicians while often lacking equivalent compensation, benefits, job security, due process protections, and safeguards against arbitrary dismissal, creating inequities that deserve thoughtful examination and collaborative solutions; and

Whereas, The FMA provides an inclusive forum through which freelance musicians across every musical genre may share experiences, develop organizing strategies, exchange best practices, identify common concerns, and advocate collectively for improved professional standards and working conditions; and

Whereas, Through committee-driven initiatives, member-led governance, education, and organizing, the FMA strengthens local organizing efforts, amplifies the voices of freelance musicians within the Federation, and provides valuable tools and resources to AFM locals, officers, and members; and

Whereas, The FMA works collaboratively with AFM Locals, Federation leadership, player conferences, and allied organizations to promote solidarity among musicians whose careers frequently span both collectively bargained employment and freelance professional work; and

Whereas, Strengthening the rights, protections, and professional opportunities of freelance musicians ultimately strengthens the labor movement, improves standards throughout the music profession, and benefits all musicians working within the Federation; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Regional Orchestra Players' Association ("ROPA") congratulates the Freelance Musicians' Association ("FMA") on its official recognition as a player conference within the American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada ("AFM") and recognizes the historic significance of establishing a permanent voice for freelance and independent musicians within the Federation; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA expresses its strong support for the mission of the FMA to unite, organize, educate, and advocate for freelance and independent musicians across all musical genres and disciplines; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA encourages its members who engage in freelance work - including substitute and extra orchestra musicians, recording musicians, educators, touring musicians, and other independent professionals - to participate actively in the FMA and take advantage of its educational resources, organizing initiatives, and opportunities for leadership and collaboration; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA supports continued collaboration among the FMA, the AFM, AFM player conferences, and affiliated locals to advance equitable working conditions, professional standards, and economic security for freelance musicians while strengthening solidarity throughout the Federation; and be it further

Resolved, That ROPA encourages the AFM to continue investing in the growth and development of the FMA so that it may serve as a lasting resource for freelance musicians and a strong partner in advancing the collective interests of all professional musicians throughout the Federation.

Submitted by: The ROPA Executive Board