



July 17, 2023

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the 24 national unions in the Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE), I strongly urge you to co-sponsor H.R. 2871, the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act (PATPA), and vote for the bill on the floor. Introduced by Reps. Vern Buchanan (R-FL) and Judy Chu (D-CA), this bipartisan legislation would update the Qualified Performing Artist (QPA) deduction, modernizing a provision that has been on the books since President Reagan signed it into law. By updating the QPA deduction, PATPA will ensure that middle-class entertainment workers can again deduct common business expenses.

Actors, stage managers, dancers, musicians, cinematographers, and many other creative professionals working as W-2 employees spend 20 to 30 percent of their income on necessary expenses to secure and maintain employment, including travel to auditions, talent agents, and camera equipment. Prior to the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, these creators could claim miscellaneous itemized deductions for business expenses. Without the ability to deduct these expenses, middle-class creative professionals, including members of DPE's affiliate unions, have experienced significant tax increases, and struggled to make ends meet.

PATPA would restore tax fairness for middle-class creative professionals by updating the eligibility threshold for the QPA deduction. QPA is a provision of the tax law that allows certain performing artists the option to take an "above the line" deduction for expenses incurred in the course of their employment. Currently, the adjusted gross income threshold for the QPA deduction is \$16,000, a level unchanged since QPA's inception in 1986. PATPA would raise the threshold to \$100,000 for single taxpayers and \$200,000 for joint filers, and also add a built-in phase out to help transition the taxpayer out of the deduction.

The ability to claim the QPA deduction would have a meaningful impact on the lives of creative professionals and their families. According to information from the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, a creative professional in Media, Pennsylvania, would have realized a tax savings of nearly 36 percent under PATPA. A Charlotte, North Carolina-based creative professional would pay about 20 percent less in taxes. A creative professional in Brooklyn, New York, would save just under 64 percent in taxes. These individuals' experiences are not unique. PATPA will allow hundreds of thousands of middle-class professionals to put money that now goes to pay higher tax bills toward the next month's rent, putting food on the table, and contributing to their local economies.

PATPA is common sense, consensus legislation that will have an immediate impact on working people with negligible budgetary impact, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation. In the 117th Congress, 92 House members from both parties co-sponsored PATPA, and the bill enjoys wide support from employers and professionals across the arts and entertainment industries.

Now is the time to restore tax fairness for hundreds of thousands of middle-class creative professionals, and to correct a flaw in the U.S. tax code that punishes these individuals for seeking work. For these reasons, I ask you to co-sponsor H.R. 2871 and support its passage on the floor.

If you have any questions, please contact me or DPE Assistant to the President/Legislative Director Michael Wasser at [mwasser@dpeaflcio.org](mailto:mwasser@dpeaflcio.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "JDorning", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jennifer Dorning, President