



April 15, 2021

Dear Member of Congress,

On behalf of the 24 national unions in the Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE), I write to express strong opposition to the Local Radio Freedom Act (LRFA). This bill would deny music professionals, including many members of DPE affiliate unions, the right to be paid fairly for their work. I ask that you neither co-sponsor nor otherwise support this legislation.

The LRFA is not about freedom, but rather the ability of major corporations to pad their profits at the expense of recording artists. American terrestrial radio stations have long profited from playing songs without compensating the artists and musicians who performed these creative works. These recording artists are not guaranteed a share of the advertising revenue their performances help generate. The LRFA would enshrine this injustice by misclassifying fair payments for the use of recording artists' works as a "tax."

Recording artists, like all professionals, deserve a fair return on their work. Just as you would not consider nurses' pay to be a tax on hospitals, you should not accept the premise, put forward by the LRFA's supporters, that frees them of the responsibility to pay artists and musicians for use of their recorded performances.

As the United States just begins to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic's economic impact, it is high time for Congress to ensure that recording artists have a performance right across all music platforms, including terrestrial radio. With their work occurring in public venues and on job sites requiring close personal contact, nearly all artists and musicians have been unable to earn money performing live since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Meanwhile, terrestrial radio stations have been able to weather the pandemic by profiting off the playing of these creative professionals' musical works. This inequity can and must be fixed.

It is for this reason that I respectfully ask that you oppose the LRFA. Congress should be working to provide a performance right for recording artists across all music listening platforms, not blocking their ability to be paid for the work they do.

If you have any questions, please contact DPE Assistant to the President/Legislative Director, Michael Wasser at mwasser@dpeaflcio.org or (202) 638-0320.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'JDorning'.

Jennifer Dorning, President