



May 30, 2018

The Honorable Ron Wyden  
United States Senate  
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Wyden,

On behalf of the 24 national unions in the Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE), I write to express strong opposition to the recently introduced Accessibility for Curators, Creators, Educators, Scholars, and Society to Recordings Act (“ACCESS to Recordings Act”). This bill is a significant threat to the economic security of our country’s legacy creators and working musicians and vocalists, many of whom are members of DPE affiliate unions. The ACCESS to Recordings Act also undermines these music professionals’ ability to end discriminatory pay practices.

Recording artists, like all professionals, deserve a fair return on their work. Music professionals must be able to benefit from the intellectual property they created in order to be properly compensated. The full term previously established and promised by Congress in 1998 for creators to benefit from their works must be fulfilled. The ACCESS to Recordings Act breaks that promise and takes several years of compensation away from music professionals, denying them the pay and retirement security they have earned. Shortchanging musical artists by stripping away years of compensation undermines the promise of a better deal for these working professionals.

DPE strongly supports S. 2823, the Music Modernization Act (MMA), which includes the Compensating Legacy Artists for their Songs, Service, and Important Contributions to Society (CLASSICS) Act. The MMA would stop unfair, discriminatory pay practices against older musicians by some digital services while providing efficiencies and exceptions for users, curators, educators, scholars, archives, libraries, and digital music services during the current term already established and promised by Congress.

DPE asks that you reconsider stripping away the current rights of music professionals and support full and fair compensation to those artists who have contributed immensely to our nation’s culture and society. If you have any questions, please contact DPE Legislative and Outreach Director, Michael Wasser at (202) 638-0320 x.119.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul E. Almeida". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Paul E. Almeida, President