



DEPARTMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

March 5, 2018



SAG-AFTRA

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
135 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

We are writing to express our strong support for the bipartisan Compensating Legacy Artists for their Songs, Service, and Important Contributions to Society (CLASSICS) Act [S. 2393]. This legislation is critically important for generations of music creators who have gone decades without fair compensation for their work.



Due to a loophole in U.S. Copyright Law, artists who recorded music before February 15, 1972, are not compensated for their recordings when they are streamed or aired on satellite or digital radio. That means some of our country's most beloved musicians and singers, from Motown artists to Rock 'n' Roll legends, have long been denied fair compensation as digital streaming services and satellite radio stations rake in profits generated by those artists work. The CLASSICS Act fixes this loophole and establishes royalties for artists who recorded music before 1972.

As the unions representing singers, musicians, recording artists and music creators, we strongly believe that all of those whom we represent deserve fair compensation for their work, not just those who created music after an arbitrary day in 1972. It is our hope that with the passage of the CLASSICS Act in the 115th Congress, 2018 will be the year in which this aberration in copyright law will no longer stand in the way of fair compensation for generations of artists who have been locked out of fair earnings for far too long.

This bipartisan legislation was introduced by Senators John Kennedy, Chris Coons, Thom Tillis, Bob Corker and Cory Booker. A similar House measure introduced earlier this year enjoys widespread bipartisan support, including a majority on the House Judiciary Committee where Republicans and Democrats support the measure in nearly equal number.

We hope you will lend your voice in support of the CLASSICS Act. We also ask that you act swiftly on this important legislation to ensure that music creators are paid no matter the year their music was made.

Sincerely,

Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO
Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA)
American Federation of Musicians of the United States and Canada (AFM)

815 16th Street, NW, 7th Floor, Washington, DC 20006

(202) 638-0320 • www.dpeaflcio.org