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AFM, AFL-CIO Taking Aim at Employer Bankruptcy Tactics

In light of the recent wave of orchestra bankruptcies, the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) has obtained a grant from the AFL-CIO to engage legal counsel to assist and represent locals in bankruptcy matters.

"The AFM and the AFL-CIO have committed resources to aggressively combat this nationwide assault on professional musicians in the symphony orchestra employment sector," says AFM President Ray Hair. "We are deploying expert legal assistance to the scene to assist our locals and members who are suffering from employers' use of bankruptcy as an escape hatch from unwanted labor agreements."

The AFM has engaged Jennifer Garner, a Dallas bankruptcy attorney, as bankruptcy counsel. "I will be working with counsel around the country that various locals have already hired and I am available to assist with any other bankruptcies that arise, as well," says Garner, who is also a violinist and a member of AFM Local 72-147 (Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX).

"This grant reflects our commitment as a labor community to address what appears to be a coordinated and systematic campaign to undermine our rights and reshape our professional lives," she adds. "We will respond, and we will be stronger for having met these challenges."

Additionally, the American Federation of Musicians and Employers' Pension Fund (AFM-EPF) has added special counsel to its legal team to address the Fund's interests in pending bankruptcies.

For more information, visit the Web site at www.afm.org.

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