



August 28, 2019
Governor Gavin Newsom
State Capitol
Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Request for Signature on SB 271 (Wiener)

Dear Governor Newsom,

The Writers Guild of America West (WGAW), on behalf of our members who write television shows, movies, news programs, documentaries, and online video programming, supports SB 271, which has been approved by the Legislature and is on your desk for consideration. We respectfully request your signature on SB 271, which will ensure that California residents working in the motion picture and television industry have access to the unemployment, disability, and paid family leave benefits to which they are entitled, regardless of where production occurs.

As the motion picture and television industry has evolved, the nature of employment has changed dramatically. It has transformed from a single employer, studio-based industry, to one where our members and the majority of entertainment industry employees move from production to production, at times working for different employers in multiple states. While this shift has occurred over many years, the laws governing the state benefits these workers receive has not been modernized.

California's Unemployment Insurance (UI), State Disability Insurance (SDI) and Paid Family Leave (PFL) programs provide significant benefits for entertainment industry workers. Yet they have outdated legal tests to determine which state should receive unemployment taxes when a worker's services are performed in multiple states. The result is that the law can make it difficult for our members who are California residents to have easy and timely access to the appropriate benefits they have earned and may need under these programs.

Despite maintaining a residence in California, paying California income taxes, and working for California employers, when production work is out of state it often causes confusion for employers who attribute the place of employment to the wrong state, making it difficult for workers to secure the appropriate amount of California UI, SDI and PFL coverage. SB 271 is written to address this very specific problem workers in the entertainment industry face. It simply

clarifies that the application of the existing tests in UI Section 602 that determine which state receives employment taxes to multistate services for work performed by our members so that the appropriate application of those tests makes their residence state the state of "employment" for UI, SDI and PFL tax and benefit purposes.

We hope we have your support in our effort to ensure that motion picture and television production workers get the benefits and protections to which they are entitled.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



David A. Goodman
President



Marjorie David
Vice President



Aaron Mendelsohn
Secretary-Treasurer