



Legislation Text

File #: Res 1460-2000, **Version:** *

Res. No. 1460

Resolution supporting a fair and equitable resolution of the ongoing labor dispute between the members of the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television & Radio Artists and advertisers.

By The Speaker (Council Member Vallone) and Council Members Berman, Carrion, Eisland, Espada, Freed, Marshall, Michels, Nelson, Perkins and Warden; also Council Members DiBrienza, Foster, Koslowitz, Linares, O'Donovan, Pinkett, Quinn, Rivera and Spigner

Whereas, On March 31, 2000, the three-year contract between the Screen Actors Guild ("SAG"), the American Federation of Television & Radio Artists ("AFTRA") and the Joint Policy Committee of the National Association of Advertisers and the Association of American Advertising Agencies expired, and, shortly thereafter, the 135,000 members of SAG and AFTRA officially commenced a national work stoppage; and

Whereas, Although actors traditionally receive "pay-per-play" for commercials aired on broadcast network television, which requires advertisers to pay actors a residual each time a commercial airs, three years ago, in an effort to reduce costs for cable television networks, which at that time garnered only a small percentage of overall television viewers, SAG members agreed to receive a one time flat rate for commercials produced for cable networks; and

Whereas, Today, cable network television now comprises 40% of the television market, with many cable networks producing original programs to compete for ratings with network television programs; and

Whereas, Since cable networks are now able to compete on equal footing with broadcast networks, fairness and equity dictate that actors should receive adequate compensation for their work on cable network commercials and that there is no longer a basis for treating cable network commercials any differently from broadcast network commercials; and

Whereas, Actor payments make up less than 1.4% of the cost to produce and air a commercial; and

Whereas, Currently actors earn a maximum of \$11 a day for unlimited use of a commercial on cable television, and, even taking into account the increase in the flat rate offered by advertisers, actors would earn \$38.50 a day, a sum less than the minimum wage; and

Whereas, Despite the notion that actors earn substantial money, 80% of SAG members earn less than \$5,000 a year; and

Whereas, New York City is considered the entertainment capital of the world and is a central location for the filming of countless broadcast and cable network television commercials; and

Whereas, As it appears that the collective bargaining process is at a stalemate, the Council urges both sides to resume negotiating in good faith, however, if the stalemate continues and either side refuses to return to the bargaining table, the Mayor should consider prohibiting the use of City-owned property and resources in the production of radio and television commercials until the dispute is resolved and further direct the Office of Film, Theatre and Broadcasting to provide public access to film permits issued on a daily basis; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York supports a fair and equitable resolution of the ongoing labor dispute between the members of the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television & Radio Artists and advertisers.

LS# 3265
07/25/00