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Mary Rasenberger

October 18th, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul

Governor of New York State

NYS State Capitol Building

Albany, NY 12224

Subject: Letter of Support for S5026/A6040, the Freelance Isn't Free Act

Dear Governor Hochul,

We are writing to express our wholehearted support for the enactment of S5026/A6040, the Freelance Isn't Free Act, recently passed by the New York State Legislature. Our organization believes that this vital legislation holds the potential to enhance the well-being and rights of a significant sector of our workforce.

The Freelance Isn't Free Act, as first established by Local Law 140 of 2016 in New York City, has introduced groundbreaking labor protections for freelance workers. These provisions, including the right to a written contract, prompt and full payment, and protection from employer retaliation, have proven indispensable for freelancers. This law has been instrumental in recovering over \$1.3 million in restitution and penalties between 2018 and 2019 alone.

Despite the success of the Freelance Isn't Free Act within New York City, freelance workers outside the city limits continue to encounter substantial hurdles. Independent contractors who are not covered by the minimum wage laws applicable to regular employees are particularly susceptible to wage theft. Moreover, freelancers often find themselves ineligible for unemployment benefits and workers' compensation, making them even more vulnerable to exploitation.

This legislative void has left numerous freelancers, including writers, editors, graphic designers, videographers, consultants, temps, and others who are self-employed, without adequate protection against wage theft. The legislation outlined in S5026/A6040 aims to rectify these deficiencies by extending the labor rights afforded by the Freelance Isn't Free Act to the entire state of New York.

By signing the Freelance Isn't Free Act into law, we can establish equity between freelancers and traditional employees. This legislation aligns with the principle that all workers, regardless of their employment status, deserve fair and timely compensation. The introduction of fundamental safeguards against harmful workplace practices will fortify our labor force and foster a more equitable work environment.

Governor Hochul, we earnestly urge you to endorse the Freelance Isn't Free Act and champion the rights of freelance workers in the state of New York. Your endorsement of this bill will exemplify your unwavering commitment to upholding labor standards and ensuring that all individuals can access equitable and dignified working conditions. Your leadership on this issue will have a profound impact on the lives of countless freelancers who make substantial contributions to our state's economy.

We express our sincere gratitude for your attention to this pressing matter and for your unwavering dedication to the well-being of all New Yorkers. We kindly implore you to swiftly sign S5026/A6040, the Freelance Isn't Free Act, into law.

Sincerely,



Mary Rasenberger

Executive Director