

NAACP overwhelmingly supports civil rights for musicians in H.R. 848

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NEW YORK, 2009 — The National Association for the Advanced of Colored People (NAACP) passed a resolution at their centennial convention on July 14 saluting Rep. John Conyers and supporting performance royalties for musicians that would be provided under the Performance Rights Act, H.R. 848—a civil rights bill for musicians.

The resolution reiterates the support of America's oldest and most prestigious African American organization for this important workers' rights and civil rights legislation.

Big radio corporations like Clear Channel and Radio One refuse to pay musicians a single cent when their music is played on the radio—a practice the bill would end. The bill in Congress only reaches big corporate radio—a specific provision protects small radio stations including all small black-owned radio stations.

“The NAACP recognizes that many black musicians are penniless in old age because Radio One and Clear Channel don't pay royalties. Performance rights is a civil rights issue, it is a workers' rights issue,” said Sean Glover, spokesperson for the musicFIRST Coalition.

“This civil rights for musicians legislation guarantees fair pay for musicians. This is a rebuke of Radio One and Clear Channel for exploiting musicians and smearing members of the Congressional Black Caucus,” Glover added.