

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**American Federation of Musicians places  
Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Inc. on International Unfair List**

On November 16, the American Federation of Musicians placed the Fort Wayne Philharmonic and its Managing Director, James “Jim” Palermo on the AFM International Unfair List. The request was made by Fort Wayne Musicians Association (AFM Local 58) President Samuel Gnagey, on behalf of musicians of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic Players’ Association. The Fort Wayne Philharmonic is the only full-time orchestra in North America currently on the Unfair List.

“Placement on the International Unfair List is a signal to performers around the world that the Fort Wayne Philharmonic treats musicians unfairly” says Deborah Nitka Hicks, cellist with the orchestra since 1992. “It is an industry-wide mark of shame that reflects poor management practices and reprehensible behavior.”

Musicians in the symphonic field are a tightly knit group and we have great respect for one another. We understand that an orchestra that has been placed on the unfair list has engaged in behavior that is exceptionally disrespectful and damaging to our colleagues. Accordingly, none of us would accept an offer of employment from any employer on the unfair list.

Throughout the pandemic, Fort Wayne Philharmonic management has displayed a refusal to bargain in good faith with musician representatives. The announcement of the Philharmonic’s placement on the AFM International Unfair List comes on the heels of two separate Unfair Labor Practice filings by musicians with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), charging management with illegally furloughing musicians (Oct. 5, 2020) and with regressive bargaining (Nov. 10, 2020). The Philharmonic’s latest CBA proposal to musicians contains cuts of contracted musicians from 63 to 15, reduction of the season from 33 weeks to 28 non-consecutive weeks, and cuts to health care, retirement, and work conditions that have been in place for decades.

For more information and to sign up for the Fort Wayne Philharmonic Players’ Association newsletter, please visit [www.fwpmusicians.com](http://www.fwpmusicians.com)