

Hundreds of actors are ready to strike if SAG-AFTRA doesn't secure a truly 'transformative deal'



Ahead of SAG-AFTRA's current labor contract with the AMPTP expiring on June 30th, hundreds of the union's members have signed an open letter to leadership warning that they are more than ready to strike if a new deal properly addressing all of their concerns isn't hammered out.

Earlier this week, SAG-AFTRA president Fran Drescher and national executive director Duncan Crabtree-Ireland posted a curious video update in which they said that they couldn't provide any real details about the union's negotiations with the AMPTP for confidentiality reasons.

SAG-AFTRA's members already voted in favor of authorizing a strike earlier this month. But the latest update from the union's leadership raised red flags that over 300 actors, including Quinta Brunson, Jennifer Lawrence, and Rami Malek,

felt compelled to sign a public letter obtained by *Rolling Stone* urging their representatives not to settle for a weak deal with the AMPTP and warning that “SAG-AFTRA members may be ready to make sacrifices that leadership is not.”

“We hope you’ve heard the message from us: This is an unprecedented inflection point in our industry, and what might be considered a good deal in any other years is simply not enough,” the letter reads. “We feel that our wages, our craft, our creative freedom, and the power of our union have all been undermined in the last decade. We need to reverse those trajectories.”

Along with expressing their general concerns about the possibility of SAG-AFTRA’s leadership not going as hard in the negotiations as it possibly could, the letter’s signees also reiterated how what they’re hoping – and willing to strike – for is a deal that leads to better minimum wages, more robust healthcare offerings, and a new residual payment model that factors in the growth of streaming. The letter also called for more control of the degree to which studios are able to make actors record themselves during the casting process and pointedly called out the industry’s adoption of AI tools as something SAG-AFTRA should be thinking about very seriously during this current round of negotiations.

“We do not believe that SAG-AFTRA members can afford to make halfway gains in anticipation that more will be coming in three years, and we think it is absolutely vital that this negotiation protects not just our likenesses, but makes sure we are well compensated when any of our work is used to train AI,” the letter says.

<https://www.theverge.com/2023/6/28/23776829/sag-aftra-strike-letter>