To whom it may concern:

I have been asked to provide a letter of support as an external member of the New Orleans SAVE NOLA SOUNDS program. I am an audiologist (and member of NHCA) and I run the Musicians’ Clinics of Canada, with offices situated in, and near Toronto, Canada. Like the Musicians’ Clinics of Canada, SAVE NOLA SOUNDS has outreach to musicians, music teachers, and other performing artists that may find themselves in adversely noisy situations. This letter is in support of the NHCA Innovation Award.

The SAVE NOLA SOUNDS program, initiated by the New Orleans Musicians’ Clinic & Assistance Foundation (NOMC & AF), aims to prevent noise-induced hearing disorders and promote safe sound exposure practices among musicians and cultural workers in New Orleans. The program empowers musicians, venues, and the broader community by providing scientifically-based hearing loss prevention and protection strategies. By establishing a voluntary compliance system or pledge, the program encourages venues to adopt safe sound practices which informed consumers will recognize and support. The goal is to set an example of ‘Safe Sounds’ and engage behavioral change, ultimately maximizing the listening experience in musicians’ rehearsal and performance environments.

One of the great strengths of both the NOMC & AF, and its SAVE NOLA SOUNDS program is its wholistic approach where issues are addressed that occur in the community and not just in an audiometric south booth. General health promotion, stress reduction, and financial and social support are all pillars of the NOMC & AF approach and the SAVE NOLA SOUNDS was born out of this broad perspective.

The SAVE NOLA SOUNDS program empowers musicians by providing them with tools and knowledge for correct decision making when it comes to their own hearing protection. Guidelines for hearing protection and control of high levels of music in the community are based on current knowledge and research. These are evidence-based guidelines.

A strength of this program is that it is voluntary, and while this may sound problematic at first, the true strength is that the guidelines and compliance are undertaken by those who are actually involved with the music making, whether it be the musicians themselves or the venues where they perform. The program seeks to educate those who are involved so that they can become their own advocates. Given the criteria of the Innovation Award, this is a unique program that works directly with musicians and venues, and using education and support, ultimately keeps the musicians healthy.

I give my full support to the SAVE NOLA SOUNDS program of the NOMC & AF for this award.

Sincerely,

Marshall Chasin, AuD, Reg. CASLPO

Doctor of Audiology