



Independent Contractors Launch #WhatTheHellDOL Social Media Campaign

The campaign is a response to the U.S. Department of Labor's plans to rewrite the rules for who can legally qualify as self-employed

WASHINGTON, D.C., June 13, 2022 — Several ad hoc groups of independent contractors nationwide have joined forces to launch #WhatTheHellDOL, a social media campaign created in response to the U.S. Department of Labor's [announcement](#) that it plans to rewrite the rules for who can legally qualify as self-employed.

Fight For Freelancers USA, a nonpartisan, grassroots, self-funded, ad hoc group of independent contractors and small-business owners; Freelancers Against AB5, which represents independent contractors in hundreds of professions, and includes seniors, people of color, people with disabilities, the chronically ill, and family caregivers; and California Freelance Writers United, a nonpartisan, ad hoc coalition created to undo the damage caused to independent contractor journalists and writers by California's Assembly Bill 5, are working together to launch the #WhatTheHellDOL campaign.

"This move by the U.S. Labor Department is the latest attempt to limit the choice of self-employment that has existed since the founding of the United States," said Kim

Kavin, a freelance writer from New Jersey who co-founded Fight For Freelancers. “The same people behind this move [supported California’s Assembly Bill 5](#), which was [such a disaster](#) that less than a year later, lawmakers had to [pass a wide-reaching emergency measure](#). California citizens then overwhelmingly voted to undo [even more of it](#). Next, these same anti-freelancer forces tried and failed to get copycat bills passed in [other states](#) and in [Congress](#). Most recently, [a federal court](#) told the U.S. Labor Department to stop breaking the law when moving toward regulatory workarounds. Now, they’re trying *again* to attack our livelihoods. Seriously, what the hell, DOL?”

President Biden [campaigned on a plan](#) to use the same anti-freelancer ABC Test that underpins the failed California law as the basis for all labor, employment and tax law nationwide. U.S. Labor Secretary Marty Walsh is now [retweeting](#) the [same talking points](#) that were used to pass California law back in 2019, and that have since proved to have little basis in fact or reality.

“To understand how destructive this anti-freelancer position is, people should read the Fight For Freelancers [amicus brief](#) that we recently co-signed, supporting a lawsuit that challenges California’s anti-freelancer law,” says Karen Anderson, founder of Freelancers Against AB5. “We continue to hope that the U.S. Supreme Court will step in and stop the catastrophe that happened in California from spreading nationwide.”

The #WhatTheHellDOL campaign urges independent contractors from all walks of life to share stories on social media about why they choose self-employment. Some 70% to 85% of independent contractors prefer self-employment, according to [government and private studies](#) dating to 2015.

“The U.S. Labor Department is giving us only two minutes apiece to speak at its upcoming hearings about the independent contractor rulemaking,” says Maressa Brown, founder of California Freelance Writers United. “Not only do self-employed Americans deserve a real seat at the table, but lawmakers and regulators nationwide must stop threatening our chosen careers and livelihoods.”

#WhatTheHellDOL

#FightForFreelancers

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