

# California IATSE Council

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## **Statement on SB 831 Safety on Sets Thom Davis, President, California IATSE Council**

The tragic shooting of one of our members on the set of “*Rust*” has made the work of raising safety standards on sets even more urgent for the California IATSE Council (CIC). IATSE’s charge as a union is to make sure our members are safe so they can go home to their families at the end of the day. That was our top priority in bargaining this past year and it remains our top priority in legislation in 2022.

CIC is proud to be sponsoring SB 831 (Cortese), a landmark bill that would both codify and strengthen firearm safety rules while also requiring that productions have a safety supervisor on set to protect the health and safety of the entire cast and crew, regardless of whether there is a firearm present. This innovative approach builds on the success of the Covid supervisor program that helped this industry recover quickly and produce safety throughout much of the pandemic.

While we have not had a firearms incident in this state for decades, we are strengthening solid and enforceable safety protections for firearm handling. This includes mandating that productions use a sufficient number of qualified armorers, that are well-trained and have the tools they need to ensure firearms are always used safely.

This legislation does not just react, however, it seeks a proactive approach to safety on sets. Productions involve climbing, rigging, complex electrical set-up, explosions, car chases, stunts, loading and unloading heavy equipment, long and irregular hours, building sets, driving difficult terrain and other potential threats, all of which can create potentially dangerous situations for workers.

We have lost members due to train accidents, fatigue-caused car accidents, and other incidents as a result of a culture that often prioritizes production goals over workers safety. To address this, we have researched safety practices around the globe and determined the best practice is to require a safety supervisor to conduct a thorough pre-production risk assessment and to be present every day and responsible for ensuring on-set safety.

We appreciate Senator Cortese working with our union and our locals to find creative and effective ways to increase safety on sets and we are proud to sponsor SB 831.