

Unnatural Disaster

May 6, 2020

Just get rid of it.

The “it” is AB-5, the absurd new law attacking California freelancers.

And those articulating the good riddance are the “151 Ph.D. Economists and Political Scientists in California” who have signed an open letter to California Governor Gavin Newsom and the state legislature.

The lawmakers who last year foisted the measure on Californians pretended that they were doing gig workers a big favor by making it impossible, in many cases, for



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companies to hire them for regular short-term jobs.

After the legislation passed, many independent contractors quickly lost work — *lots* of work. For example, Rev, which produces transcripts and captions, said goodbye to all of its freelancers based in California. Many other companies — reluctant to be prosecuted for the crime of engaging in voluntary economic

relationships between consenting adults — also ended relationships with freelancers.

Apparently, the anti-gig lawmakers did not realize that losing one’s means of paying for food and rent is not that helpful.

Tornadoes, hurricanes, and pandemics have a way of highlighting the importance of the economic and other institutions that make human survival and civilization possible.

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“By prohibiting the use of independent contractor drivers, health care professionals, and workers in other critical areas,” the open letter explains, “AB-5 is doing substantial, and avoidable, harm to the very people who now have the fewest resources and the worst alternatives available to them.”

The solution is “suspend AB-5.”

It was always the solution, the *obvious* solution.

But now it is even more obvious.