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White House Urged to Step Up Efforts to Protect Intellectual Property

Music, Movie, and Television Creators Embrace New Business Models, but Cite Growing Threat to Jobs from Copyright Theft

Washington, DC – A wide coalition representing American movie, television and music industry and labor groups today urged the Federal Government to bolster its efforts to protect intellectual property and protect the jobs and wages lost because of content theft.

In response to a request for public comment by the White House's Office of Intellectual Property Enforcement, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), the Directors Guild of America (DGA), the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE), the National Music Publishers' Association (NMPA), the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) and the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) submitted a joint filing that outlined the organizations' collective views.

The groups commended Victoria Espinel, the U.S. Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator (IPEC), for embarking on this landmark effort to develop the first Joint Strategic Plan for enforcing intellectual property rights. And while they hailed the promise of online distribution models, in their submission they emphasized that its potential was undermined by the theft of creative content:

While that threat takes many forms, the growth of online theft of copyrighted works presents the greatest and most urgent challenge. The Internet in general, and broadband services in particular, offer many new and exciting opportunities to consumers; prime among them are new ways to create, distribute, and enjoy copyrighted works. But when these networks are abused to provide widespread unauthorized access to these works, that undermines seriously the incentive to invest in the creation of content for this new medium, or for more traditional distribution channels. U.S. jobs, economic recovery and growth, and U.S. global competitiveness are consequently weakened. Unauthorized worldwide dissemination of full-length copyrighted works is clearly unlawful, under U.S. law and that of most other nations; yet it is pervasive online, and this abuse throttles the potential of the Internet to deliver its full benefits to the American consumer. While in many cases this unlawful activity is stimulated by

criminal enterprises that profit from the thefts they promote, it also thrives on the willful ignorance and tacit support of other businesses that are unwilling to take commercially reasonable steps to address it. Online copyright theft undermines our economy, steals our jobs and threatens our national interest.

The filing catalogues not only the extensive studies documenting how theft of intellectual property results in lost jobs and wages for Americans all across the nation -- as well as the substantial economic contribution of the copyright industries -- it also examines the profound threat to the creative culture of our society:

While these studies and data paint a comprehensive portrait of the economic costs of copyright theft to our society, they should not obscure something else that is far harder to quantify but equally as powerful and important to the future of our country: the threat copyright theft poses to creativity, innovation, and culture in our society. This far more intangible contribution cannot be captured in terms of dollars or profit and loss. Making a motion picture or a sound recording comes down to a creative process that is the collaboration of many talented people -- with an end result that is personal both to the creator and the audience. The motion pictures, television programs and sound recordings that our industry creates are a representation of our freedoms, our culture, and our diversity to the world. They are woven into the fabric of our culture and are part of our national heritage.

The organizations pointed to several emerging problem areas and urged that additional resources and tools be made available to address the increasingly sophisticated means of conducting online copyright theft:

The online environment has been dramatically transformed by technological and market developments, both with respect to the nature and scope of the online infringement challenge, and with respect to the effectiveness and flexibility of the technological tools available to meet it. For example, while the dawn of the Internet may have provided us with a glimpse of the possibilities for business, networking, and communication, the problems caused by illicit p2p networks, warez groups, and abuse of social networking sites were largely unforeseeable. In addition, the evolution of subscription-based and ad-supported services such as online lockers, direct streaming sites and linking sites impose new barriers to enforcement.

The exponential growth of illegal activity through these offerings has made it increasingly difficult for content owners to take effective measures. Many of these sites and businesses are specifically constructed to abuse the system and avoid copyright liability. Content owners and authorities need tools to address these illegal activities and the services that facilitate them.

Lastly, the groups' filing emphasizes that effective strategies to combat theft are a "means to an end" designed to complement the innovative and attractive business models fully embraced and supported by the creative industries:

These tools, it must be emphasized, are critical, but they are means to an end. That end is a dynamic, content-rich, readily accessible, and hassle-free marketplace that excites and engages consumers while it also compensates those who, for almost a century, have made it possible for American movies, music and other media to entertain and educate audiences (around the

world). We will continue to do our part: seeking out and embracing innovative new models, transforming how we do business to serve the 21st century consumer and offering fans countless new ways to enjoy their favorite content. The steps we identify in this submission are designed to bolster these efforts and ensure that both the existing and emerging business models attain their full potential to serve and satisfy both the public and those who create content.

To read the joint filing in full, please click [here](#).

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About the Signers of this Filing:

About AFTRA

The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, AFL-CIO, are the people who entertain and inform America. In 32 Locals across the country, AFTRA members work as actors, journalists, singers, dancers, announcers, hosts, comedians, disc jockeys, and other performers across the media industries including television, radio, cable, sound recordings, music videos, commercials, audiobooks, non-broadcast industrials, interactive games, the Internet and other digital media. The 70,000 professional performers, broadcasters, and recording artists of AFTRA are working together to protect and improve their jobs, lives, and communities in the 21st century. From new art forms to new technology, AFTRA members embrace change in their work and craft to enhance American culture and society. Visit AFTRA online at www.aftra.com.

About DGA

The Directors Guild of America was founded in 1936 to protect the economic and creative rights of directors. Over the years its membership has expanded to include the directorial team - Unit Production Managers, Assistant Directors, Associate Directors, Stage Managers and Production Associates. Today, through the collective voice of more than 14,000 members, the Guild seeks to protect the rights of directorial teams, to contend for their creative freedom and strengthen their ability to develop meaningful and lifelong careers in film, tape and digital media.

About IATSE

The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, Its Territories and Canada, AFL-CIO, CLC (IATSE) is one of the largest entertainment labor unions in the world and represents over 110,000 technicians, artisans and craftspeople employed in stagecraft, motion picture and television production, the trade show industry, and affiliated crafts throughout the United States, Its Territories and Canada. For background information on the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees: www.iatse-intl.org.

About NMPA

Founded in 1917, the National Music Publishers' Association (NMPA) is the trade association representing American music publishers and their songwriting partners. The NMPA's mandate is to protect and advance the interests of music publishers and songwriters in matters relating to the

domestic and global protection of music copyrights.

About SAG

Screen Actors Guild is the nation's largest labor union representing working actors. Established in 1933, SAG has a rich history in the American labor movement, from standing up to studios to break long-term engagement contracts in the 1940s to fighting for artists' rights amid the digital revolution sweeping the entertainment industry in the 21st century. With 20 branches nationwide, SAG represents over 125,000 actors who work in film and digital motion pictures and television programs, commercials, video games, industrials, Internet and all new media formats. The Guild exists to enhance actors' working conditions, compensation and benefits and to be a powerful, unified voice on behalf of artists' rights. SAG is a proud affiliate of the AFL-CIO. Headquartered in Los Angeles, you can visit SAG online at www.SAG.org <<http://www.SAG.org>> or fan us on Facebook at <http://fbblink.com/ScreenActorsGuild>.

About MPAA

The Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. (MPAA) serves as the voice and advocate of the American motion picture, home video and television industries from its offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. Its members include: Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.; Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation; Universal City Studios LLLP; and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

About RIAA

The Recording Industry Association of America is the trade group that represents the U.S. recording industry. Its mission is to foster a business and legal climate that supports and promotes our members' creative and financial vitality. Its members are the record companies that comprise the most vibrant national music industry in the world. RIAA® members create, manufacture and/or distribute approximately 85% of all legitimate sound recordings produced and sold in the United States. In support of this mission, the RIAA works to protect intellectual property rights worldwide and the First Amendment rights of artists; conduct consumer industry and technical research; and monitor and review state and federal laws, regulations and policies. The RIAA® also certifies Gold®, Platinum®, Multi-Platinum™, and Diamond sales awards as well as Los Premios De Oro y Platino™, an award celebrating Latin music sales and its new Digital Sales award.

For More Information:

AFTRA: Christopher de Haan, 323-634-8203
DGA: Sahar Moridani, 310-289-5333
IATSE: Katherine Orloff, 212-730-1770
NMPA: Gayle Osterberg, 202-548-0133
SAG: Pamela Greenwalt, 323-440-2892
MPAA: Howard Gantman, 202-293-1966
RIAA: Jonathan Lamy, Cara Duckworth, 202-775-0101