

March 10, 2015

Dear Members of Congress,

We are members of the creative community. While our political views are diverse, as creatives, there are a few core principles on which we can all agree. We appreciate the opportunity to share our views with the 114th Congress.

We embrace the internet as a powerful democratizing force for our world and for creative industries.

We recognize its ability to inspire positive change and improve lives. In our creative industries, the internet has helped to advance creativity by removing barriers to entry for newcomers, fostering a dialogue with fans and audiences, and providing numerous additional ways to reach them. The internet holds great potential to expand creativity and free expression.

We embrace a strong copyright system that rewards creativity and promotes a healthy creative economy.

The internet is a revolutionary platform that connects the world. The incredible cultural and economic value that it delivers to billions of users is based in very large part on the efforts of creative content makers whose livelihoods depend on being compensated for their efforts. Technology companies are making massive profits from creatives' contributions to the internet's growth. It is not too much to ask that content creators should be compensated for the value they bring.

We proudly assert that copyright promotes and protects free speech.

Freedom of speech and freedom of expression go hand in hand with the freedom to create and to preserve the value and integrity of what one creates. The copyright clause of the Constitution is not in conflict with the First Amendment. To creative people, self-expression is deeply personal. It is at the heart of everything creatives do. We view any effort to diminish the rights of creatives in the name of "free speech" as cynical and dishonest.

Copyright should protect creatives from those who would use the internet to undermine creativity.

The internet can be a great tool for creatives, just as it can be a tool for science, education, health care, and many other disciplines. However, when misused, it can harm creativity and stifle freedom of expression. President Obama, who has consistently advocated for a free and open internet, acknowledged at Stanford last month, "It's one of the great paradoxes of our time that the very technologies that empower us to do great good can also be used to undermine us and inflict great harm." Pirate site operators who profit from stolen creative works with impunity are one obvious example of the latter.

Creatives must be part of the conversation and stand up for creativity.

Some organizations and advocates, who in many cases are funded by technology companies, repeatedly claim to be pro-creatives and pro-audience to mask their own self-serving agenda. They denigrate or block effective efforts to preserve and promote creative content, including enforcement of existing laws and voluntary industry initiatives. The creative community is rightfully wary of any company or organization that claims to be "against piracy" when their actions do not match their words.

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There is no “left” or “right” when it comes to respecting copyright. The creative community stands united in support of a copyright system that has made and continues to make the United States the global leader in the creative arts and the global paradigm for free expression. Our copyright system is not perfect but, like democracy, it is better than the alternatives. It works. We urge Congress to resist attempts to erode the right of creatives to determine when and how they share their works in the global marketplace.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute our views.

Kate Abernathy	Nicolas Chartier	Sarah Eaton
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