



ASSOCIATION OF  
TALENT AGENTS  
Since 1937

November 9, 2011

The Honorable Lamar Smith  
Chairman  
House Committee on the Judiciary  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith:

On behalf of the Association of Talent Agents (ATA), I am writing to encourage you to press for the enactment this year of strong legislation aimed at stopping foreign-based rogue websites that steal American creative content.

ATA is a seventy-five year old non profit trade association representing over 150 talent agencies in the United States. ATA member talent agencies represent over 90% of the artists working across the entertainment industry. For decades, ATA agents have worked in partnership with artists and their guilds to ensure their protection and promote their creative endeavors.

Talent agents create opportunities for their clients, procuring and negotiating employment and counseling clients in the development of their careers. Indeed, the success of American films, television shows, and other productions owes much to the overwhelming talent of the artists we support – and to our agents’ skill in creating creative and economic opportunities for clients. As a result, the ATA and its members have a very direct understanding of the real threat content theft poses to artists all across this country.

As you may know, much of the revenues earned by creative productions – and that the clients receive – come not from opening weekend box office receipts or from the first broadcast of a TV show, but from aftermarket sales including legitimate online platforms. When rogue websites steal and sell or distribute creative content, everyone who legitimately should benefit loses. They lose hard fought earnings, benefits, and pensions that they rely on to support themselves and their families. Equally damaged are the investment dollars for yet-to-be-developed productions. As the economic losses mount due to stolen content the amount of dollars for future production are significantly affected.

We are united to stop the massive theft of American creations. We are heartened to see that Congress has turned its attention to this problem, and is working on legislation that would prohibit rogue sites from the U.S. marketplace. Thank you. We are available to offer further insight into the impact of content theft on our members and their clients.

Sincerely,

Karen Stuart  
Executive Director

CC:

The Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the House, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Eric Cantor, Majority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Democratic Leader, U.S. House of Representatives

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