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COTY
COTY BEAUTY LANCASTER GROUP

November 28, 2011

Hon. Lamar Smith
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
2409 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith:

On behalf of Coty Inc., I would like to thank you for your recent introduction of H.R. 3261, the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA). The trafficking of counterfeit goods online has become a significant problem in recent years, and one that trademark owners and licensees such as Coty Inc. currently have few effective tools to address. The new tools which would be provided to rights-holders under SOPA are an important step towards ensuring that companies like mine are able to compete in a fair online marketplace.

The prevalence of fake goods on the internet poses a major threat to consumer confidence in the legitimacy of the online retail market and present a major health and safety risk to US citizens who purchase counterfeits of the perfumes we manufacturer and distribute. I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on the Judiciary Committee to ensure the passage of the strongest bill possible.

At present, the individuals behind rogue websites operate largely with impunity, conducting their illicit business beyond the reach of criminal or civil enforcement in the United States. They steal from legitimate businesses and defraud consumers, in turn, stifling innovation and costing the US economy in terms of both jobs and tax revenue. The new tools proposed by H.R. 3261 are vital to addressing these harms.

I commend your leadership in bringing together stakeholders from across the online ecosystem to craft a holistic approach to the protection and enforcement of IP rights online. An effective process requires the involvement of and responsible efforts by, all of those who engage in, or enable, online commerce. The Stop Online Piracy Act creates such a process, and I look forward to working with you and your colleagues on the Judiciary Committee to ensure the enactment of legislation that fully, effectively, and efficiently addresses these vital concerns.

Sincerely,

J. J. Duggan