



Secretariat:
444 North Capitol, NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20001
Tel: (202) 624-5460
Fax: (202) 624-5452
Web: www.sidoamerica.org

October 31, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary
United States House of Representatives
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers
Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary
United States House of Representatives
B-351 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner, Leader Pelosi, Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Conyers:

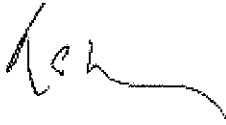
On behalf of the State International Development Organizations (SIDO), we write in support of **H.R. 3261, the "The Stop Online Piracy Act,"** and urge Congress to address the serious issue of counterfeiting and piracy of U.S. products occurring on foreign rogue websites. SIDO is the premier U.S. organization dedicated to supporting state international trade agencies and is the only national organization focused exclusively on state international trade development.

As part of the President's National Export Initiative, U.S. small and medium-sized exporters (SMEs) are charged with the lofty task of doubling America's exports by 2015. As such, it becomes increasingly important to identify threats and strengthen enforcement against intellectual property (IP) theft and other harmful practices abroad and that negatively impact American exporters. Criminals have turned to the Internet, abusing its virtually unlimited distribution opportunities to expand their illicit activities. And they are succeeding; a recent study by Mark Monitor found that just a small sample of 43 rogue sites generate over 53 billion visits a year.

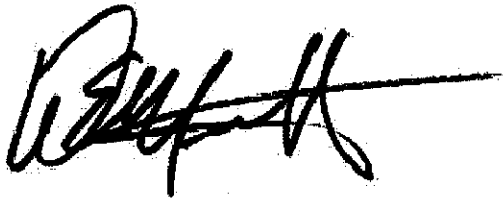
Copyright infringers and counterfeiters profit from the theft of American-made products and ideas, jeopardizing revenues and jobs that together make up more than a third of the U.S. economy and employ more than 19 million workers. Moreover, counterfeit products are often of inferior quality or outright harmful design, posing a serious and very real threat to the health, safety, and well-being of our citizens and to the economic competitiveness of U.S. states and companies.

While issues of counterfeiting and content theft are not new, the proliferation and extent of these activities today has reached unprecedented levels. We urge your colleagues in Congress to follow the Senate's leadership by making the introduction and enactment of rogue sites legislation a top priority. On behalf of SIDO members and American SMEs, we thank you for your attention and leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manny' with a long, sweeping underline.

Manny Mencia, President, SIDO
Sr. Vice President, International Trade & Business Development, Enterprise Florida

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wade Merritt' with a long, sweeping underline.

Wade Merritt, Vice President, SIDO
Vice President, Maine International Trade Center