

2/18/2011

## Rogue Sites are Stealing American Jobs!

To the Members of the United States Congress:

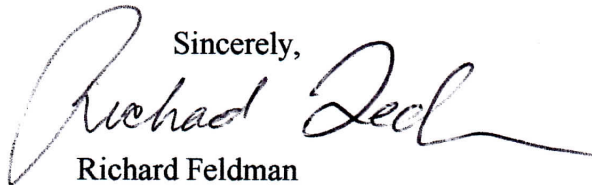
The undersigned businesses, labor organizations, professional organizations, and trade associations urge you to make it a priority to enact legislation that will provide the government with enhanced tools to disrupt websites that profit by stealing the intellectual property (IP) of America's innovative and creative industries. These rogue websites are part of a network of counterfeiting and piracy that a recent study found cost **2.5 million jobs** in the G20 economies.

Many of these sites pose as legitimate businesses, luring consumers with sophisticated and well-designed websites. But, in reality, the counterfeit and pirated products these sites distribute are often of poor quality, harmful, and promote fraud. Further, consumers put themselves at risk of identity theft and malicious computer viruses by visiting these sites. Enacting legislation to address rogue websites would be a major step to make the Internet safer and protect consumers from the dangers of buying in the online marketplace.

IP industries are a cornerstone of the U.S. economy, employing more than 19 million people and accounting for 60 percent of our exports. Rampant online counterfeiting and piracy present a clear and present threat that we must do more to address. A recent study examined about 100 rogue websites and found that these sites attracted more than 53 billion visits per year. That averages about 9 visits for every man, woman, and child on Earth. It is not surprising that global sales of counterfeit goods via the Internet from illegitimate retailers reached \$135 billion in 2010. What's more, as a consequence of global and U.S.-based piracy of copyright products, the U.S. economy lost \$58.0 billion in total output in 2007.

The United States cannot and should not tolerate this criminal activity. As the studies show, the theft of American IP is the theft of American jobs. And rogue sites negatively impact the health and safety of American citizens. Last year, Senator Patrick Leahy and Senator Orrin Hatch introduced S. 3804 to combat rogue sites and were joined by an impressively bipartisan group of 18 additional Senators. That bill was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee 19-0. In the House of Representatives, Judiciary Committee Chairman Lamar Smith and Ranking Member John Conyers have long recognized the harm from IP theft and led efforts to address it. We urge you to support bicameral introduction and enactment of rogue sites legislation this year and look forward to working with you in support of that goal.

Sincerely,



Richard Feldman  
President – The Association of Independent Music Publishers

