



March 24, 2010

The Honorable Victoria Espinel
United States Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator
Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President
New Executive Office Building
725 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20503

In the Matter of Request for Submissions Regarding Development of a Federal Effort
Against Intellectual Property Infringement.

The American Federation of Musicians (AFM), American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), Directors Guild of America (DGA), International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) and Screen Actors Guild (SAG) represent artists and craftspeople who create the movies, television programs, sound recordings and other forms of entertainment that people around the world love and demand. Together, our entertainment guilds and unions represent over 300,000 individual workers whose livelihoods depend on the enforcement of this country's copyright laws to prevent theft of their creative output. At stake are not just our members' jobs and well-being, but also the well-being of their families, and hundreds of thousands of ancillary jobs in communities across the country where our members live and work.

Creation of films, television programs and sound recordings would not occur without the personal investment of time, financial risk and –most importantly–the creativity, talent and skill of our members. Like all endeavors, their success is hard to achieve and fragile to maintain. That is why it is so critical to protect their creativity in the digital age, which has given rise to the rampant theft of movies, television programming and sound recordings. Understanding full well the disastrous impact of unchecked online theft and illegal Internet activity on our members—and on young people who aspire to work in our business—we greatly appreciate your efforts to craft the Initial Joint Strategic Plan as required by the PRO-IP Act. We commend this effort and welcome the opportunity to be part of the process. We are submitting this filing to underscore the fact that we do not stand alone.

On March 2 the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO unanimously adopted a statement on the subject of intellectual property theft. The statement offers a detailed analysis of the harm done to US workers by online theft and other illegal activity. The statement affirms the importance of this problem to the AFL-CIO, its affiliate unions, and its members: "Motion pictures, television, sound recordings and other entertainment are a vibrant part of the U.S. economy. They yield one of its few remaining trade surpluses. The online theft of copyrighted works and the sale of illegal CDs and DVDs threaten the vitality of U.S. entertainment and thus its working people." It goes on to say "The AFL-CIO strongly supports the efforts of the AEMI (Arts, Entertainment and Media Industries) unions and the Department of Professional Employees, AFL-CIO to combat piracy. The AFL-CIO urges its affiliate unions to educate their members about the adverse impact of piracy; to support efforts to ensure that government officials and lawmakers are aware of, and support the protection of, entertainment industry jobs that will be lost to online theft..."

With this filing we submit, as part of the data and recommendations you are collecting, the full text of the AFL-CIO March 2 Executive Council statement. We believe the attached document merits its own recognition in your proceedings.

We are fully engaged in the process the Obama Administration has undertaken and look forward to working with the IPEC and all relevant agencies in the coming days.

Sincerely,

Tom Lee
President
American Federation of Musicians

Kim Roberts Hedgpeth
National Executive Director
American Federation of Television and Radio Artists

Jay D. Roth
National Executive Director
Directors Guild of America

Matthew D. Loeb
International President
International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employes (IATSE)

David White
National Executive Director
Screen Actors Guild

cc: Richard L. Trumka, President, AFL-CIO
Paul Almeida, President, DPE