

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0104

COMMITTEES:
BUDGET
Ranking Member
JUDICIARY
ARMED SERVICES
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

November 21, 2011

Mr. Heath Landrum
PO Box 2598
Auburn, Alabama 36831

Dear Mr. Landrum:

Thank you for contacting me regarding S.968, the Preventing Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity and Theft of Intellectual Property Act.

On May 26, 2011, S.968 was favorably reported out of the Senate Judiciary Committee by a voice vote and has been placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar.

S. 968 includes a narrow definition of "rogue" websites – those sites dedicated to the sale of infringing or counterfeit goods – and provides law enforcement with a necessary tool to stop websites engaged in such illegal activity. Furthermore, the legislation authorizes the Department of Justice to file civil actions against the owners of domain names that access infringing websites, and allows rights holders who are victims of infringement to bring private actions and obtain court orders against the domain name owners or registrants of infringing websites.

Currently, the Department of Justice is limited in blocking websites offering infringing content. Although many of these websites are foreign owned and operated, their top level domain names and corporate advertising lend a sense of authenticity that is inviting to many American consumers. Consequently, online piracy and trademark infringement cost rights holders and the U.S. economy upwards of an estimated one hundred billion dollars every year.

Consumers of digital media certainly have a right to use their private property in accordance with the law. Consumers may make fair use copies of copyrighted material under current law, and the doctrine of fair use should continue to be applied to copyrighted works. At the same time, it is important to protect the rights of intellectual property producers. The companies that create and produce copyrighted work have a right to be protected against piracy and other illegal reproduction of their works.

I appreciate you bringing your thoughts to my attention and will keep them in mind as this bill progresses through the legislative process.

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Thank you for again for writing. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any additional questions or comments that you may have.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Sessions". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jeff Sessions
United States Senator

JS: kl