

November 16, 2011

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith:

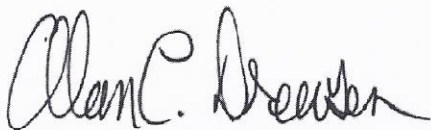
The International Trademark Association (INTA) applauds your introduction of H.R. 3261, the "Stop Online Piracy Act" (SOPA), as a means to address the growing problem of counterfeits sold on the Internet. INTA represents over 5,900 trademark owners and law firms, including many small and medium size businesses. Our members register their trademarks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) but struggle to protect the integrity of these marks in the face of the very sharp increase in online counterfeiting.

In many instances, counterfeiting presents a severe health and safety risk for consumers. In all cases, it is detrimental to the growth and stability of the global economy. Trademark counterfeiting causes significant harm to the brand owner including lost sales, damage to the company's image and the increased costs associated with the online enforcement of its marks.

Brand owners are committed to working with the Department of Justice and other enforcement agencies to tackle the sale of counterfeits over the Internet. Legislation that enhances law enforcement's authority to tackle infringement of intellectual property online is a welcome and necessary step. Passage of the bill will give the government important new tools to identify and disable websites whose only purpose is to sell counterfeit goods or give access to pirated content.

INTA firmly believes that increased enforcement of the law against websites selling counterfeit goods must be a priority. Mr. Chairman, your leadership in introducing H.R. 3261 is a critical step in addressing this issue, and INTA looks forward to working with the members of the House Judiciary Committee on the legislation.

Sincerely,



Executive Director