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## International Anti-Piracy Caucus Unveils “2006 International Piracy Watch List”

Washington, D.C.: At a press conference today the Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus, which is chaired by Senators Gordon Smith (R-OR), and Joe Biden (D-DE) and Congressmen Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) and Adam Schiff (D-CA), unveiled the “2006 International Piracy Watch List”. In an effort to combat international copyright piracy by calling attention to countries where piracy has reached alarming levels the Caucus announced they will closely monitor the serious problems of copyright piracy in the following six countries: China, Russia, Mexico, Canada, India and Malaysia.

The advent of digital technology holds the promise of a golden age for movies, music, video games and other forms of entertainment. More new devices for watching, listening to, recording, sharing and saving music and movies have emerged in the last decade than in the previous 100 years. And these technologies are a key to American economic growth: indeed, the combined copyright industries – movies, home video and television programming, music, books, video games and software – generate more revenues than any other single manufacturing sector, including automobiles and auto parts, aircraft and agriculture. They are responsible for more than five percent of the nation’s GDP. The film industry alone has a surplus balance of trade with every country in the world.

Disturbingly, however, an explosion in piracy and a diminution in copyright protection have accompanied these exciting new advances in entertainment technology. Organized crime has become heavily involved in foreign DVD and CD piracy. Criminals are using the same formidable distribution network and resources that were developed for drug trafficking and arms smuggling. The result, in these and other countries, is a virtual evisceration of the legitimate market for American entertainment.

**“International piracy is just a fancy way to say stealing on an enormous scale,”** said Senator Smith. **“Governments have the obligation to crack down on the systematic theft of intellectual property within their borders. Stopping the hemorrhage of U.S. revenue is critical to successful economic relationships with other countries.”**

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America is the largest creator, producer, and exporter of copyrighted material.

**“American innovation and creativity need to be protected by our government no less than our personal property, our homes and our streets. Theft of intellectual property is a crime, pure and simple,”** said Senator Biden. **“It costs our economy over \$15 billion every year and results in over \$1 billion of lost tax revenues. That is money that could be used to hire an additional 13,000 local police officers to patrol our streets, or provide interoperable communications equipment for our 30 largest cities, to help prevent the next 9/11 or respond to the next Katrina.”**

The Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus intends to focus on copyright piracy problems in China and Russia. These two countries stand out because of the scope and depth of their piracy problems, which cost the U.S. copyright industries and the millions of Americans who work in these companies \$4 billion in 2005 alone and because piracy in these countries is largely the result of a lack of political will to confront the problem.

Congressman Goodlatte said, **“The U.S. is far and away the world's largest producer and exporter of the creative works that entertain, inform and educate the world. In addition, the contribution of the American copyright industry to the strength of the overall American economy is significant. A vibrant sector of the U.S. economy is at tremendous risk due to widespread piracy of U.S.-made movies, music, software, videogames and other creative works. We must work with our international trade partners to secure the enactment of strong copyright laws and the vigilant enforcement of those laws.”**

**“I see first-hand the toll that intellectual property theft takes on our economy,”** Congressman Schiff said. **“My district in Southern California is home to many hard-working Americans whose jobs are in the movie and recording industries, the software business, and science and engineering. Their workproduct is being stolen and our entire nation is being put at a comparative economic disadvantage. The United States must exercise its influence with Russia, China and other nations to take comprehensive action against global piracy.”**

The Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus, which was formed in 2003 by Senators Smith and Biden and Representatives Goodlatte and Schiff, is made up of 73 members of Congress. The goal of the Caucus is to provide briefings for Congressional delegations traveling to countries with significant piracy problems, staff and member briefings and forums on international intellectual property protection and piracy, demonstrations of new technologies and products designed to improve consumers' entertainment experiences and to reduce piracy and to work closely with the committees of jurisdiction in the House and Senate on related hearings and legislation.

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