

# The Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus



Senator Gordon H. Smith, Co-Chair  
Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Co-Chair

Congressman Bob Goodlatte, Co-Chair  
Congressman Adam B. Schiff, Co-Chair

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CONTACT: Kathryn Rexrode with  
Congressman Goodlatte at 202-225-5431,  
Sean Oblack with Congressman Schiff at  
202-225-4176, Lindsay Gilbride with  
Senator Smith at 202-224-3753, Annie  
Tomasini with Senator Biden at 202-224-  
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## International Anti-Piracy Caucus Unveils “2008 International Piracy Watch List”

Washington, D.C.: At a press conference today the Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus, which is chaired by Senators Joe Biden (D-DE) and Gordon Smith (R-OR), and Congressmen Adam Schiff (D-CA) and Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), unveiled the “2008 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 that it will closely monitor the serious problems of copyright piracy in China, Russia and Canada, and to a lesser extent the piracy problems in Mexico, Greece and Spain.

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.

Unfortunately an explosion in piracy and a diminution in global 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 substantial reduction of the legitimate market for American entertainment.

**“Piracy is just another word for stealing – it’s criminal and it’s wrong, plain and simple,”**

said Senator Joe Biden. **“American ingenuity – the cornerstone of our history and culture – is being threatened. Our ideas, our music, our books, our movies, our innovations are just as precious as any tangible property. Unfortunately – not all countries see it that way, resulting in billions of dollars in lost revenue to the U.S. economy. With new technologies coming out at warp speed, this global problem will only get worse. We’ve got to update our own laws to remain a step ahead of the criminals and keep the pressure on our trading partners to take this problem for the serious crime that it is.”**

America is the largest creator, producer, and exporter of copyrighted material. Industry estimates that global piracy costs U.S. firms \$17 billion in lost sales annually.

**“Our ingenuity and creativity are this nation's strongest assets,”** Senator Smith said. **“Theft of our innovation is indistinguishable from stealing our physical goods and products. The scale of copyright piracy among those who should be our strongest trading partners is unacceptable.”**

This year the Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus will focus on copyright piracy problems in China, Russia and Canada. These three countries continue to stand out because of the scope and depth of their piracy problems and because piracy in these countries is largely the result of a lack of political will to confront the problem. Violations in these countries contribute to costing the U.S. copyright industries and millions of American workers billions of dollars annually.

In addition to these countries, the Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus will also monitor the serious piracy problems in Spain, Greece and Mexico.

**“When one of our trading partners allows copyright infringement to occur with impunity, they are gaming the system and injuring our economy,”** said Congressman Schiff. **“When people buy DVDs on the street or download music on the Internet without paying for it, they aren’t just stealing products, they’re stealing jobs from American workers. We must take much stronger action to ensure countries on the list are forced to take piracy seriously.”**

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, books, 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 and we will especially be watching closely those countries that have been highlighted today.”**

Finally, the Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus is pleased to note that some positive steps have been taken by the governments of Lebanon, Malaysia, and Turkey in addressing their piracy problems. Local governments and law enforcement in these countries have begun working together to effectively fight piracy.

The Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus, which was formed in 2003 by Senators

Biden and Smith and Representatives Schiff and Goodlatte, is made up of 70 members of Congress. The goals of the Caucus are 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 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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