

Creators and Innovators Support
H.R. 1695, “The Register of Copyrights Selection and Accountability Act of 2017”

Dear Members of Congress

We write to express support for H.R. 1695, *The Register of Copyrights Selection and Accountability Act of 2017* (RCSAA), and ask you to vote in support of the bill and to urge House leadership to schedule the bill to be voted on the floor.

The undersigned groups recognize the tremendous value that copyright provides to the U.S. economy and culture. They include creators and innovators, as well as the organizations, unions, guilds, and companies that employ, support, and represent them.

H.R. 1695 Recognizes the Importance of Copyright to the U.S. Economy, Jobs and Culture: Copyright is critical to the U.S., with core copyright industries contributing over \$1.2 trillion to the U.S. GDP and employing more than 5.5 million U.S. workers. The Copyright Office, headed by the Register of the Copyrights, plays a central role in helping Congress develop copyright policy. Making the Register of Copyrights a presidential appointee subject to the advice and consent of the Senate reflects the growing importance of copyright to our economy and culture, and treats the head of the Office like other officials with oversight over similarly significant industries.

H.R. 1695 Restores Congress’ Power to Obtain Expert, Neutral Copyright Advice: The Register of Copyrights is Congress’ statutorily designated copyright expert. The Register is unilaterally selected by the Librarian of Congress. The Library has a mission of national importance, but it is different than and sometimes in conflict with the role of the Copyright Office as Congress’ advisor and steward of the creative economy. H.R. 1695 finally gives Congress a formal role in selecting its advisor through the confirmation process. This will ensure Congress receives the expert advice it needs to discharge its responsibility under Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 of the Constitution to promote knowledge and culture through copyright policy.

H.R. 1695 Establishes a More Balanced, Neutral and Transparent Process for Selecting the Register: Making the Register a presidential appointee subject to Senate confirmation ensures a more balanced and neutral selection process compared to the status quo, in which the Register is appointed solely at the discretion of the Librarian of Congress—a process that does not require any direct input from the Administration or Congress. The confirmation process not only improves the opportunity to vet candidates and increases accountability to Congress, but also gives all Americans a voice in the selection of the Register through their elected representatives.

H.R. 1695 is an Essential Step in Modernizing an Antiquated Copyright Office: Changing the Register to a presidential appointee with the advice and consent of the Senate is a necessary first step to modernizing the Copyright Office. It will help ensure that the Register of Copyrights has the voice and resources needed to implement policy, manage its operations, and organize its information technology in a way that brings the Copyright Office into the 21st century. To date, its efforts to do so have been frustrated by the competing needs and direction of the Library.

H.R. 1695 Enjoys Widespread Bipartisan, Bicameral and Stakeholder Support: The bill enjoys overwhelming support due to its modest approach. It passed through the Judiciary Committee by a decisive 27-1 vote and is supported by a wide range of groups.

The Time to Move H.R. 1695 is Now: A few who are interested in weakening copyright policy are trying to polarize debate with partisanship, personal aspersions, and *ad hominem* attacks. This bill is not about any one President, any one Librarian, or any one Register. It is the product of four years of bipartisan, bicameral discussion. It reflects the consensus view of policymakers that presidential appointment and Senate confirmation puts the Copyright Office on a better footing to meet its statutory duties and serve the American people for generations to come.

For the reasons above, we urge you to vote in favor of H.R. 1695.

21st Century Fox
Administrators of Gospel Music
Adobe Systems, Inc.
American Association of Independent Music
American Chemical Society
American Photographic Artists
American Society of Media Photographers
Artist Rights Society
Association of American Publishers
Association of Independent Music Publishers
The Association of Magazine Media
The Authors Guild
Broadcast Music, Inc.
Christian Music Trade Association
Church Music Publishers Association
Copyright Alliance
Copyright Clearance Center
CreativeFuture
Digital Media Licensing Association
Directors Guild of America
Future of Music Coalition
Getty Images
Global Music Rights
Gospel Music Association
Graphic Artists Guild
Independent Film & Television Alliance
Motion Picture Association of America

Nashville Songwriters Association International
National Association of Broadcasters
National Music Publishers Association
National Press Photographers Association
NBCUniversal
News Corp
News Media Alliance
North American Nature Photography Association
Oracle
Pearson
PLUS Coalition
Professional Photographers of America
The Recording Academy
Recording Industry Association of America
RELX Group
Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation
of Television and Radio Artists
SESAC
Software & Information Industry Association
Sony Music Entertainment
SoundExchange
Universal Music Group
Viacom Inc.
The Walt Disney Company
Warner Bros.
Warner Music Group