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ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY URGES SUPREME COURT TO MAINTAIN FIRST AMENDMENT PROTECTIONS

WASHINGTON – A broad entertainment industry coalition today urged the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold a 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that found unconstitutional the 2005 California law restricting the sale and rental to minors of computer and video games deemed to be overly violent.

The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), Directors Guild of America, Inc. (DGA), Producers Guild of America (PGA), Screen Actors Guild (SAG), Writers Guild of America West, Inc. (WGAW), Independent Film and Television Alliance (IFTA), National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO) and Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. (MPAA) joined together to file an amicus brief in the case *Schwarzenegger v. Entertainment Merchants Association*, which is scheduled for oral arguments on November 2.

“The history of the motion picture industry serves as a vivid illustration of the threat to First Amendment rights from the impulse to control and censor new forms of media—a threat reflected in the statute at issue before the Court. From the advent of motion pictures, a variety of state and local governments sought to restrict their content for the asserted purpose of protecting moviegoers from being exposed to harmful material,” the organizations explained in their brief.

“While parents have an undoubted interest in making informed judgments concerning the suitability of exposing their children to potentially objectionable content, [California has] failed to show that the government’s assistance is necessary to serve that interest,” the organizations’ brief continues. “And the fundamental lesson of the motion picture industry is that self-regulation can sufficiently enable parents to exercise their right to make informed judgments concerning movie content. The movie rating system has widely been praised for its effectiveness, and society’s long experience with the movie rating system demonstrates that a properly designed voluntary rating system can serve the relevant parental interest without the need for content-based government regulation.”

The entertainment industry coalition concluded that if the Supreme Court were to uphold California’s statute, it would have a “dramatic chilling effect on the motion picture industry.”

Therefore, the coalition urged the Court to rule that “under settled First Amendment principles, California’s statute is invalid, and the judgment of the court of appeals should be affirmed.”

An electronic copy of the amicus brief filed with the U.S. Supreme Court is available at www.mpa.org/Resources/89c2d42d-229c-4214-adb9-d3b312c36c35.pdf.

About the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists

The American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, (AFTRA, AFL-CIO), are the people who entertain and inform America. In 32 Locals across the country, AFTRA members work as actors, journalists, singers, dancers, announcers, hosts, comedians, disc jockeys, and other performers across the media industries including television, radio, cable, sound recordings, music videos, commercials, audio books, non-broadcast industrials, interactive games, the Internet, and other digital media. The 70,000 professional performers, broadcasters, and recording artists of AFTRA are working together to protect and improve their jobs, lives, and communities in the 21st century. From new art forms to new technology, AFTRA members embrace change in their work and craft to enhance American culture and society. Visit AFTRA online at www.aftra.com.

About the Directors Guild of America, Inc.

The Directors Guild of America, Inc. (DGA) represents more than 14,000 directors and members of the directorial team who work in feature film, television, commercials, documentaries, news, sports and new media. DGA's membership is international and includes Film and Television Directors, Unit Production Managers, Assistant Directors, Associate Directors, Stage Managers and Production Associates. DGA seeks to both protect and advance the economic and artistic rights of directors and preserve their creative freedom.

About the Producers Guild of America

The Producers Guild of America is the non-profit trade group that represents, protects and promotes the interests of all members of the producing team in film, television and new media. The PGA has over 4,500 members who work together to protect and improve their careers, the industry and community by providing members with health benefits, employment opportunities, the creation of fair and impartial standards for the awarding of producing credits, as well as other education and advocacy efforts such as promoting sustainable production practices. Visit www.producersguild.org and www.pgagreen.org for more information.

About the Writers Guild of America, West

The Writers Guild of America, West (WGAW) is a labor union representing writers of motion pictures, television, radio, and Internet programming, including news and documentaries. Founded in 1933, the Guild negotiates and administers contracts that protect the creative and economic rights of its members. It is involved in a wide range of programs that advance the interests of writers, and is active in public policy and legislative matters on the local, national, and international levels. For more information on the WGAW, please visit: www.wga.org.

About the Independent Film & Television Alliance

The Independent Film & Television Alliance (IFTA) is the global trade association of the independent motion picture and television programming industry. Headquartered in Los Angeles, the organization represents and provides significant entertainment industry services to more than 150 member companies from 23 countries, consisting of independent production and distribution companies, sales agents, television companies, studio-affiliated companies, and financial institutions engaged in content finance. Collectively, the Independent Film & Television Alliance's members produce more than 400 independent films and countless hours of television programming each year and generate more than \$4 billion in distribution revenues annually. The organization's premiere event, the American Film Market

takes place every year in November in Santa Monica. For more information on IFTA and the American Film Market, please visit www.ifta-online.org.

About the National Association of Theatre Owners

The National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO) is the largest trade association in the world for the owners and operators of motion picture theatres. NATO represents over 500 movie cinema companies located in the United States and in over 40 countries around the world. These companies range from large national and international circuits with thousands of movie screens, to hundreds of small business operators with only a few movie screens. NATO maintains its main office in Washington, D.C., and a second office in North Hollywood, California.

About the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc.

The Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. (MPAA) serves as the voice and advocate of the American motion picture, home video and television industries from its offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. Its members include: The Walt Disney Studios; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.; Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation; Universal City Studios LLLP; and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

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