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Speaking In Canada, NATO President Challenges Early VOD And Announces New Support From Creative Community

(OTTAWA, ONTARIO, *June 1, 2011*) In a keynote speech at industry confab ShowCanada, NATO President & CEO John Fithian today urged Canadian movie theater operators to be vigilant in their focus on theatrical release windows. Challenging a recently announced proposal from four Hollywood studios to release movies early to the home on "premium" VOD, Fithian explained the dangers of the model. "Early VOD releases to the home could damage the movie industry in two significant ways," Fithian asserted. "Early releases will reduce movie ticket sales, and will exacerbate movie theft by giving pirates an early pristine copy of movies." Fithian also reiterated NATO's call for the participating studios to release sales data from their experiment. "How can the industry evaluate the studios' test if they continue to hide the facts."

Fithian's remarks at ShowCanada marked an expanded, global phase in NATO's work to preserve the theatrical release window. Beginning with Canada this week, moving to Europe later in the month and onto Australia in August, Fithian will hold dozens of meetings with leading international exhibitors on the topic. "We hope that this early VOD experiment begins and ends in the U.S.," Fithian continued. "But if not, we want exhibitors everywhere to be prepared."

In his remarks, Fithian also praised the growing number of leading movie directors and producers who have publicly stated their concerns with shortened release windows. "The creative community understands the vital importance of robust theatrical release windows to their art form and their business interests," Fithian stated. "We are pleased today to announce additional signers of our creative community letter, including directors David Dobkin, Jon Favreau, Chris Nolan, M. Night Shyamalan, and Quentin Tarantino, as well as producers Mark Boal and Jim Cardwell."

ShowCanada will run through Thursday, June 2 in Ottawa.



About NATO

The National Association of Theatre Owners is the largest exhibition trade organization in the world, representing more than 30,000 movie screens in all 50 states, and additional cinemas in 50 countries worldwide. www.natoonline.org

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