



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CREATIVE INDUSTRY COALITION LAUDS BILL TO MAKE ILLEGAL STREAMING OF MOVIES AND TV A FELONY**

WASHINGTON—Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and John Cornyn (R-TX), Members of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, today introduced legislation that would classify the illicit online streaming of copyrighted content a felony, and bring it into line with other forms of content theft.

An entertainment industry coalition, including the Independent Film & Television Alliance® (IFTA®), the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc. (MPAA) and the National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO) praised the bill for reconciling the current legal disparity between the unlawful distribution of content through streaming and peer-to-peer (P2P) downloading.

“It is high time that the punishment fit the crime. Illegal streaming of stolen content is growing and poses a threat to the profitability of movie theaters and to the jobs of our 160,000 employees in the U.S.” said John Fithian, president and CEO of NATO. “We thank Senators Klobuchar and Cornyn and recommend bipartisan support for the passage of this important legislation.”

“The illegal streaming of copyrighted content is a scourge on the independent film and television community, particularly the small and medium-sized businesses without the resources to effectively enforce their intellectual property rights,” said Jean Prewitt, IFTA President & CEO. “We strongly believe government enforcement and consequences are the only effective remedies for these types of illegal activities. We highly commend Senators Klobuchar and Cornyn for this significant legislative proposal to ensure illegal streaming is treated as seriously under the law as is illegal downloading.”

Michael O’Leary, Executive Vice President, Government Affairs for the MPAA, added: “Criminals are stealing, trafficking, and profiting off the investment that our workers devote to creating the quality films and TV shows that entertain a worldwide audience and bolster the American economy. The online distribution mechanisms utilized by thieves may differ, but to the 2.4 million American workers whose livelihoods depend on our industry, the end result of content theft is the same: lost jobs, declining incomes, and reduced health and retirement benefits for them and their families. We thank Senators Klobuchar and Cornyn for introducing this important legislation to standardize the legal treatment of online content theft and helping ensure that federal law keeps pace with the

changing face of criminal activity. We look forward to working with Members in the House and Senate towards its swift passage.”

Under current federal law, a legal distinction exists between illegal streaming and downloading – two methods of distributing the same stolen, digital content. This legislation would make the illegal streaming of copyrighted works a felony, thereby standardizing its criminal classification with that of illegal P2P downloading, already a felony. In March, the Office of U.S. Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator Victoria Espinel presented Congress with legislative recommendations to improve IP enforcement efforts, which included clarifying this aspect of intellectual property law.

### **About IFTA®**

*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 institutions engaged in content finance.*

*Collectively, IFTA’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 is also widely recognized for producing the American Film Market® (AFM®), the world’s largest motion picture trade event held each November in Santa Monica.*

*As the voice and advocate for the independent film and television industry worldwide, the Alliance speaks out on matters of critical importance and, where appropriate, actively lobbies governments around the world in regard to measures directly affecting the independent industry.*

### **About the MPAA**

*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: Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.; Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation; Universal City Studios LLC; and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.*

### **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.*

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