

Slate

Marco Rubio Flips Against PIPA

By David Weigel

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The freshman Republican senator who'd co-sponsored the Protect IP Act has flipped the car around and stepped on the gas.

Earlier this year, this bill passed the Senate Judiciary Committee unanimously and without controversy. Since then, we've heard legitimate concerns about the impact the bill could have on access to the Internet and about a potentially unreasonable expansion of the federal government's power to impact the Internet. Congress should listen and avoid rushing through a bill that could have many unintended consequences.

The Internet regulation issue is... well, complicated, and I'd [recommend the work](#) of Julian Sanchez to readers who want to understand it. The piece I just linked to demonstrates something about members of Congress: They are far too easy to snow, on this issue and on any other issue where an industry knows how to make some "save-the-jobs" argument. Basically, the estimates for how much money is lost due to Internet piracy are way off, and those are the estimates that the MPAA et al use to bring members on board and, per Sanchez, "turn the Justice Department into a *pro bono* litigation service for Hollywood." It's reminiscent of the natural gas industry's insistence that the Keystone XL pipeline will create 20,000 jobs, because an American Petroleum Institute study said so.