

Inside Counsel

Hollywood wants international treaty to toughen copyright laws

Focuses on piracy as a revenue damaging offense

By Alexis Harrison

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Illegal downloads and bootleg sales continues to be bad for business for Tinseltown, and the powers-that-be in Hollywood are getting tough and is lobbying for strong intellectual property laws to be adopted in the [Trans-Pacific Partnership](#).

[Marketplace.org](#) reports that Anissa Brennan, vice president for International Affairs and Trade Policy at the Motion Picture Association of America, is calling for the treaty to follow U.S. law, which doesn't allow movie goers to film what's on the screen, then sell illegal copies.

She explains in a recent article on *marketplace.org*, "If you go into a theater and you record a film without the permission of the theater owner, it's a criminal act." She is also calling for the trade deal to extend copyrights to the life of the author plus 70 years.

The treaty, according to the [Washington Post's](#) technology blog, 'Switch,' is a trade accord that will ease the flow of goods and services among the United States, Canada, Chile, Japan, New Zealand, Malaysia, and other nations along the Pacific Rim. But it has attracted criticism for its secrecy, and for the inclusion of controversial provisions related to copyright, patent, and trademark protections.

Back in November, *WikiLeaks* revealed provisions of the treaty while the 'ultra-secret' negotiations between partner countries were occurring. When the draft was leaked, the Motion Picture Association of America reacted favorably to the United States's role in talks, saying that it 'put forth no proposals that are inconsistent with U.S. law.'

"The United States has the most dynamic creative and technology sectors in the world, and an open and free Internet. The TPP proposals attributed to the U.S. would build upon that tremendous foundation." "To the extent that other countries are unwilling to take on these obligations, it threatens the viability of the agreement," Michael O'Leary, Senior Executive Vice President for Global Policy and External Affairs for the Motion Picture Association Inc.

[Bill Watson](#), a trade policy analyst at the libertarian Cato Institute, is an advocate of free trade. He told [marketplace.org](#) that U.S. negotiators have taken Hollywood's position, which isn't very popular. "

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Watson doesn't think the movie protections the U.S. is pushing for will derail the trade negotiations. But he says it's putting stress on a very fragile deal.