
U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—December 5, 2007 Contact: John Reid/Chris Gindlesperger

U.S. Chamber Praises Introduction of Bi-Partisan Bill to Get Tough on Counterfeiters

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Chamber of Commerce applauds today’s bi-partisan introduction of H.R. 4279 by Chairman John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI), Ranking Member Lamar Smith (R-TX), and Representatives Howard Berman (D-CA), Steve Chabot (R-OH), Steve Cohen (D-TN), Tom Feeney (R-FL), Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), Darrell Issa (R-CA), Ric Keller (R-FL), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Adam Schiff (D-CA), and Robert Wexler (D-FL). The House bill would double the penalties for counterfeiters whose actions result in injury or death, increase resources for enforcement at U.S. Customs and Border Patrol and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and create a permanent position at the White House dedicated to intellectual property (IP) protection.

“Intellectual property protection is among a handful of issues that will determine America’s competitiveness in the 21st century. We can no longer sit idly by while American jobs, American ingenuity, and innocent lives are at risk,” said Tom Donohue, Chamber president and CEO. “The enactment of this bill into law is a crucial and substantive step to finding real solutions to thwart the growing plague of global intellectual property theft. It’s not just the right thing to do – it’s urgent and necessary for the sake of our personal and economic security.”

Counterfeiting and piracy are a global epidemic which cost the U.S. economy \$250 billion annually and have led to the loss of more than 750,000 jobs. In June, the Chamber led Coalition Against Counterfeiting and Piracy announced the *Campaign to Protect America*, an aggressive, comprehensive set of recommendations, several of which are included in the pending legislation. The bill itself is supported by more than 500 businesses and trade associations, as well as organized labor.

“It’s time to recognize the severity of these crimes. We are talking about thieves that threaten the health, safety, and jobs of everyday Americans,” said Donohue. “Legislation to strengthen penalties for these sophisticated crooks and provide greater resources for the men and women on the ground fighting this raging epidemic is imperative.”

The Chamber’s Global Intellectual Property Center is working around the world to champion IP as a vital engine of global development, growth, and human progress. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world’s largest business federation representing more than 3 million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region.