



Contact:  
Christopher de Haan  
(323) 634-8203



Contact:  
Sahar Moridani  
(310) 289-5333



Contact:  
Katherine Orloff  
(212) 730-1770



Contact:  
Howard Gantman  
(202) 293-1966



Contact:  
Pamela Greenwalt  
(323) 440-2892

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **First Amendment Expert Floyd Abrams Says *Stop Online Piracy Act* Would Protect Creators of Speech**

**Los Angeles** – Leading First Amendment expert Floyd Abrams sent a letter this week to House Judiciary Chairman Lamar Smith and Ranking Member John Conyers reaffirming that the *Stop Online Piracy Act* currently under consideration in the House of Representatives in no way imperils the First Amendment.

In the letter, Abrams writes:

“Any legislative efforts to limit what appears on the Internet, or to punish those who post materials on it, requires the closest scrutiny to assure that First Amendment rights are not being compromised. That is true of all limits on speech, and it is no less true of the Internet. But the Internet neither creates nor exists in a law-free zone, and copyright violations on the Internet are no more protected than they are elsewhere.

“The notion that adopting legislation to combat the theft of intellectual property on the Internet threatens freedom of expression and would facilitate, as one member of the House of Representatives recently put it, ‘the end of the Internet as we know it,’ is thus insupportable. Copyright violations have never been protected by the First Amendment and have been routinely punished wherever they occur, including the Internet. This proposed legislation is not inconsistent with the First Amendment; it would protect creators of speech, as Congress has done since this Nation was founded, by combating its theft.”

The *Stop Online Piracy Act* would, if passed, give the U.S. Department of Justice more effective tools to protect American intellectual property, including the films, television shows and sound recordings created by our members, from foreign rogue websites that knowingly and deliberately engage in the illegal distribution of our content for profit.

The full Abrams letter, which was written on behalf of AFTRA, the DGA, IATSE, SAG and the Motion Picture Association of America in advance of the November 16 House Judiciary Committee hearing on the *Stop Online Piracy Act*, is attached.

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