



March 27, 2017

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States House of Representatives
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
United States House of Representatives
2142 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Support for H.R. 1695, the Register of Copyrights Selection and Accountability Act of 2017

Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Ranking Member Conyers:

The American Intellectual Property Law Association (“AIPLA”) is pleased to support H.R. 1695, the “Register of Copyrights Selection and Accountability Act of 2017.” AIPLA welcomes this important proposed reform and urges its prompt consideration.

AIPLA is a national bar association of approximately 14,000 members who are primarily lawyers engaged in private or corporate practice, government service, and the academic community. AIPLA members represent a wide and diverse spectrum of individuals, companies, and institutions involved directly or indirectly in the practice of patent, trademark, copyright, trade secret, and unfair competition, as well as other fields of law affecting intellectual property. Our members represent both owners and users of intellectual property. Our mission includes helping to establish and maintain fair and effective laws and policies that stimulate and reward invention and authorship while balancing the public’s interest in healthy competition, reasonable costs, and basic fairness.

AIPLA previously provided testimony before the Judiciary Committee at the February 26, 2015 hearing on “U.S. Copyright Office: Its Functions and Resources.”¹ Consistent with that testimony and with positions developed by AIPLA since the hearing, AIPLA favors action to appropriately modernize the U.S. Copyright Office (the “Office”), enabling it to meet the ever-expanding needs and expectations of Congress, its stakeholders, and the public.

AIPLA also believes that it is key to these modernization efforts that the Office be led by an individual who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. AIPLA supports a strong and balanced copyright system, and it is imperative that the Office is appropriately managed and directed.

¹ *U.S. Copyright Office: Its Functions and Resources: Hearing Before the Comm. on the Judiciary*, H.R., 114th Cong. 36-51 (2015) (testimony of Nancy J. Mertz, Schoeman Updike Kaufman & Stern LLP, on behalf of the AIPLA (Feb. 26, 2015)) (“Mertz Testimony”), available at https://judiciary.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/114-4_93529.pdf.

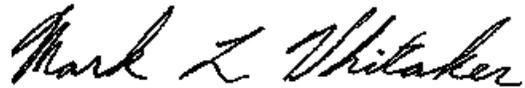
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AIPLA appreciates the Committee's attention to this issue. We believe that the time has come for this proposed reform, and we look forward to working with the Committee on H.R. 1695 as the process moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark L. Whitaker". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark L. Whitaker

President

American Intellectual Property Law Association