



**Minority Media &  
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**MMTC Statement on Bills to Prevent Online Piracy, S.968 & H.R. 3261**

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The Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (MMTC), the nation's leading advocate for the interests of minorities in communications, recommends the passage of legislation to curtail the theft of intellectual property primarily by foreign websites. The pending bills are the Preventing Real Online Threats to Economic Creativity and Theft of Intellectual Property Act of 2011, S.968 ("Protect IP") and the Stop Online Piracy Act, H.R. 3261 ("SOPA").

Online piracy is severely detrimental to our digital economy because it impacts access to capital, particularly for new, small and minority entrants in the digital content market. It also threatens the economic viability of minority entrepreneurs in heritage technologies, such as broadcasting, who must build digital platforms in order to survive.

Because of the racial wealth gaps of 18% and 20% between White households and Hispanic and African American households respectively,<sup>1</sup> minority digital entrepreneurs seldom possess extensive holdings of hard, collateralizable assets, such as software or real estate. Instead, intellectual property – the content itself – is generally the only significant asset owned by minority digital entrepreneurs that they can use for collateral. The inability to receive a return on their investment in content production makes it difficult for digital entrepreneurs to raise capital and thus reduces their ability to continue in business.

The issue of IP theft is deeply urgent. House and Senate leaders should move quickly to secure passage of this important legislation.

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<sup>1</sup> See Rakesh Kochhar et al., *Wealth Gaps Rise to Record Highs Between Whites, Blacks and Hispanics*, *Pew Research Center* (July 26, 2011), p. 1, available at [http://pewsocialtrends.org/files/2011/07/SDT-Wealth-Report\\_7-26-11\\_FINAL.pdf](http://pewsocialtrends.org/files/2011/07/SDT-Wealth-Report_7-26-11_FINAL.pdf) (last visited Nov. 16, 2011).