



December 13, 2016

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President-Elect of the United States
Office of the Presidential Transition
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President-Elect:

Congratulations on your election to serve as the 45th President of the United States. We look forward to working with you and your Administration on behalf of American music – one of our nation’s most valuable forms of art and intellectual property, and a powerful driver of high-quality U.S. jobs and exports.

We represent the music community of America. From songwriters, musicians and recording artists, to artist managers, music publishers and record companies. From producers and engineers, to performing rights organizations and genre organizations that promote everything from Americana and blues to classical, Christian, Gospel and country to hip-hop, jazz, pop, rock, R&B, and everything in between.

So much of what you wrote in your platform this summer about intellectual property and private property rights resonated with many of us, including:

“Intellectual property is a driving force in today’s global economy of constant innovation. It is the wellspring of American economic growth and job creation. With the rise of the digital economy, it has become even more critical that we protect intellectual property rights and preserve freedom of contract rather than create regulatory barriers to creativity, growth, and innovation.”

And calling for strong action to enforce intellectual property laws against infringers.

As you meet tomorrow with some of the world’s major corporate technology executives, we wanted to highlight some points that are assuring the continued dynamism of music as one of America’s national treasures.

Music powers economic growth. Among other research, just this week a new study reported that music and other copyright industries in the U.S. contribute more than \$1.2 trillion to our national economy and create jobs for more than 5.5 million Americans. Music is one of our nation's great exports.

Music drives innovation. Consumers today enjoy more music in more formats than ever, as the music industry has aggressively embraced technology. The industry has worked with more than 360 digital services providing instant access to tens of millions of songs from any location in our country at the touch of a button.

Indeed, many of today's popular technology platforms owe much of their growth and success to music. Music is responsible for the most-followed accounts on Facebook and Twitter, the most-watched videos on YouTube, and is one of the most popular draws for phones and other personal devices. These platforms thrive and grow by delivering the creative genius of songwriters and artists.

As partners, many in the technology and corporate community should be commended for doing their part to help value creators and their content. Some have developed systems to promote a healthy market for music and deter theft. However, much more needs to be done. Search engines, user upload content platforms, hosting companies, and domain name registrars and registries should follow others' example to effectively stop theft and assure fair payment.

Further, there is a massive "value grab" as some of these corporations weaken intellectual property rights for America's creators by exploiting legal loopholes never intended for them – perversely abusing U.S. law to underpay music creators, thus harming one of America's economic and job engines.

Surely the world's most sophisticated technology corporations can do better – by helping to prevent illegal access and paying fair market value for music with prices set by or based on the free market.

Strong protection for intellectual property rights will assure growth in both creativity and technology, benefiting the American economy as a whole.

We hope you will lead the effort to assure American creativity is encouraged, invested in, protected and fairly compensated in a manner that carries out the exclusive rights guaranteed in the Constitution to those who, with the genius of their mind, form the cultural identity of our great nation.

Sincerely,

American Association of Independent Music (A2IM)

American Federation of Musicians

American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP)

Americana Music Association

Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI)

Church Music Publishers' Association (CMPA)

Christian Music Trade Association (CMTA)

Gospel Music Association

The Living Legends Foundation, Inc.

Music Managers Forum - U.S.

Nashville Songwriters' Association International (NSAI)

National Music Publishers' Association (NMPA)

The Recording Academy

Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA)

Rhythm & Blues Foundation

Screen Actors' Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA)

SESAC

The Songwriters Guild of America

SoundExchange