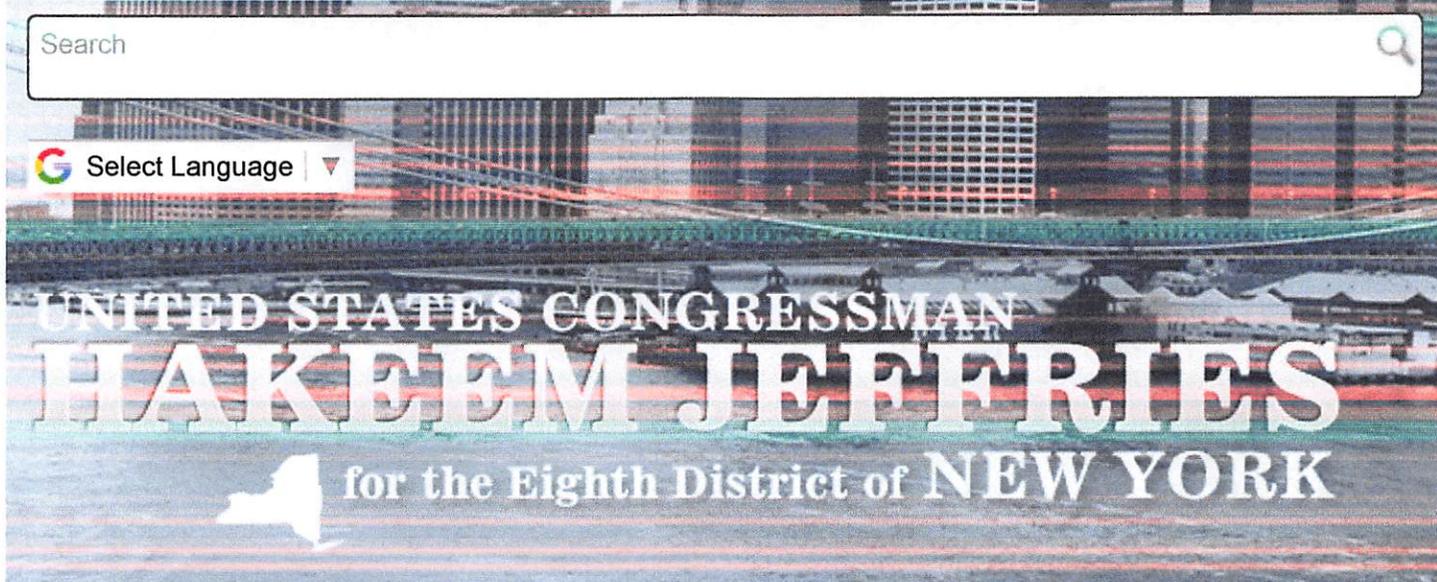


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Reps. Jeffries, Marino Lead Bipartisan Effort to Help Musicians and Artists Protect Their Creative Work

Oct 4, 2017 | Press Release

WASHINGTON, DC – A bipartisan solution to help artists, photographers, filmmakers, musicians, songwriters, authors and other creators protect their life’s work from unauthorized reproduction has been introduced today by two key members of the House Judiciary Committee -- U.S. Representative Hakeem Jeffries (NY-08), a Democrat, and U.S. Representative Tom Marino (PA-10), a Republican.

The Copyright Alternative in Small-Claims Enforcement (CASE) Act of 2017 will create a Copyright Claims Board (“CCB”) in order to provide a simple, quick and less expensive forum for copyright owners to enforce their intellectual property. The majority of the copyright owners that are affected by piracy and theft are independent creators with small copyright infringement claims. The CCB will establish an alternative forum to the Federal District Court for copyright owners to protect their work from infringement.

A broad coalition of legislators have co-sponsored the bill, including Democratic Congresswoman Judy Chu (CA-33), Republican Congressman Doug Collins (GA-9), Democratic Congressman Ted Lieu (CA-33) and Republican Congressman Lamar Smith (TX-21).

Rep. Jeffries said: “The establishment of the Copyright Claims Board is critical for the creative middle class who deserve to benefit from the fruits of their labor. Copyright enforcement is essential to ensure that these artists, writers, musicians and other creators are able to commercialize their creative work in order to earn a livelihood. The CASE Act will enable creators to enforce copyright protected content in a fair, timely and

affordable manner. This legislation is a strong step in the right direction.”

Representative Marino said: “Creators, solo entrepreneurs, photographers, and artists often struggle to enforce their copyright in a timely and cost efficient manner. This can hinder creativity and prevent these professionals from being able to sustain a profitable livelihood. The CASE Act provides a boost to copyright holders and allows a forum for timely resolutions. This is a positive step in the right direction.”

Representative Collins said: “America’s economic leadership depends on its commitment to protecting intellectual property, and I’m proud to work with my friend Congressman Hakeem Jeffries to provide another tool to make this possible. A copyright small claims system would offer small creators a simple, effective forum for defending their property rights against infringement. We’re working to modernize the Copyright Office to meet the needs of today and tomorrow—including music licensing structures—and this bill is a critical step in strengthening intellectual property protections for creators who find themselves disadvantaged by existing policies.”

Representative Lieu said: “More than 2 million hardworking artists in the United States rely on the U.S. Copyright Office to protect their livelihoods. For too long, our legal system skewed in favor of low-volume, high-value industries. But for many independent artists, whose claims of infringement often total a few thousand dollars, it is far too expensive to sue in federal court – essentially forcing creators to forfeit their rights. The Small Claims Board is an important step toward ensuring that digital photographers, graphic artists, illustrators, and others have a way to resolve disputes quickly and affordably. I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for supporting this crucial effort.”

Representative Smith said: “Our founders enshrined copyright protection for creators’ works in the Constitution. The Copyright Alternative in Small-Claims Enforcement Act offers creators an efficient and cost-effective process to protect their creations. I look forward to working with the authors of the bill to protect the intellectual property of all innovators.”

Representative Chu said: “Creators like artists, photographers, and songwriters contribute over a trillion dollars to our economy each year. But intellectual property theft makes it difficult for creators to earn a living. This is especially true for small and individual creators who depend on licensing and copyright, but lack the resources to adequately challenge copyright infringement claims in federal court. I’m proud to support the CASE Act because it proposes a common sense solution that will make it easier for creators to protect their intellectual property and continue to share their works and grow our economy.”

Participation in the CCB will be voluntary, and respondents will have the ability to opt out. The CCB will be housed within the U.S. Copyright Office, and its jurisdiction limited to civil copyright cases with a cap of \$30,000 in damages. A panel of three Copyright Claims Officers will be designated to adjudicate and settle copyright claims. The simplified proceedings do not require the parties to appear in-person and will permit them to proceed *pro se* – i.e., without an attorney.

The bill is supported by the Authors Guild, American Society of Media Photographers, American Photographic Artists, National Press Photographers Association, Professional Photographers of America, North American Nature Photography Association, Songwriters Guild of America, Nashville Songwriters Association International, National Music Publishers Association, Digital Media Licensing Association, Graphic Artists Guild, Creative Future, and the Copyright Alliance.