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July 21, 2025

Senate Judiciary Committee, Crime Subcommittee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Hawley, Durbin and Welch,

On behalf of the Society of Composers & Lyricists (SCL) and our membership of music creators working in film, television, streaming, video games, and emerging media, I write to express our deep gratitude for the powerful and principled statements that you all expressed during the recent Senate Judiciary Committee Crime Subcommittee hearing, *"Too Big to Prosecute? Examining the AI Industry's Mass Ingestion of Copyright Works for AI Training."*

Your willingness to speak out in defense of American creators is not only commendable—it is patriotic. At its core, this issue isn't just about copyright or commerce. It's about the very values that define the United States of America: individual liberty, the sanctity of private property, and the right to reap the rewards of one's own labor. These rights are enshrined in our Constitution and must be upheld in the digital age just as they were in the founding days of our republic.

The SCL fully agrees that this is "a moral issue as much as anything else"—a matter of whether America will continue to be a nation that respects and protects the rights and creations of individuals. The warning against allowing "mega-corporations" to profit off the uncompensated work of others with impunity resonated deeply with our members.

At a time when rapidly advancing technology threatens to outpace the laws that govern it, the Subcommittee's leadership reminds us that America must never trade its founding principles for convenience or profit. The strength of our nation lies in its ability to protect the rights of the individual—even, and especially, in the face of enormous corporate power.

The SCL is firmly committed to ensuring that creators are not left behind in the AI era. We advocate for the foundational "Three Cs" that every generative AI system must observe:

Consent from creators before their works are ingested by generative systems,
Credit for all audiovisual creators whose work is used, and
Compensation at fair market rates for both ingestion and derivative outputs.

As you know, the core copyright industries—including publishing, film, theater, television, music, software, gaming, newspapers, and magazines—not only play a vital role in the U.S. economy but also carry a profound responsibility in shaping our culture and society. Yet the freelance creators who fuel these industries

remain dangerously under-protected, as generative AI systems are increasingly trained to mimic their work without permission or compensation.

We were especially encouraged by the acknowledgments during the hearing that Generative AI systems are being trained on copyrighted works without authorization, and many of these works were sourced from illegal online repositories.

This is not innovation—it is appropriation. And it undermines the very engine of American ingenuity.

The SCL stands ready to work alongside all of you to ensure that our laws reflect our values. Let us continue building a future where creativity is honored, the Constitution is upheld, and the American Dream remains possible for those who dare to create.

With sincere appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley Irwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Ashley Irwin
President
The Society of Composers & Lyricists

cc. Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee Crime Subcommittee