



MOMENTUM CONTINUES ON MUSIC REFORM WITH SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE HEARING

RECORDING ACADEMY™ HIGHLIGHTS NEED TO UPDATE MUSIC LAWS WITH CREATOR TESTIMONY

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MAY 15, 2018) — Today, members of the Recording Academy™ joined executives from across the music industry to testify on Capitol Hill about the current state of music law. Before the Senate Judiciary Committee, witnesses spoke of how current copyright law has impacted them and urged the committee to pass S. 2823, the Music Modernization Act. The companion bill to [H.R. 5447 – Music Modernization Act](#), which unanimously passed the House of Representatives less than a month ago, S. 2823 provides the first major reform to music copyright law in decades.

Sixteen committee members attended the hearing, including Chairman Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and the bill's sponsor, Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah).

Speaking on how copyright laws impact music creators, and the role of music in our culture, Chairman Grassley stated, "The exclusive rights and protections that our copyright laws grant are the foundation upon which America's creators and artists stand and thrive. It's important that singers, songwriters, musicians, technical engineers, producers, and all the men and women who support the creativity and artistry behind American music be rewarded for their efforts and incentivized to continue producing their invaluable work."

"For too long our licensing laws have disadvantaged content creators and sowed uncertainty," said Sen. Hatch. "Our bill will bring our music licensing laws into the 21st century to ensure that songwriters are compensated fairly for their work, and that digital music services are able to operate without constant legal uncertainty."

Representing the Recording Academy and working music creators, GRAMMY®-nominated children's music artist and [Recording Academy Trustee Justin Roberts testified](#) stating, "Many [Recording Academy] members—in fact most of America's music makers—are just like me: middle-class Americans and songwriters who are not household names. These middle-class artists use their training and talent to bring music to the world. Perhaps the least recognized among us are the music producers."

Roberts continued to describe the impact producers have had on his musical career, from his preschool teacher to the producer that was instrumental in him pursuing music as a professional career. He also acknowledged that while it would be easy for producers to simply ask for passage of the AMP Act, a producer-focused music bill, it would be a "fundamental misunderstanding of the heart of a producer" for them to do so.

"As an artist, I can tell you most of us rely on the structure, steady hand, and technical talent of a producer," Roberts testified. "The producer works with artists, but also songwriters, engineers, record labels, studio owners, and nearly everyone associated with the creation of a record. The producer takes care of all of us. So, it's no wonder that they want to see the AMP Act passed as part of the broader [Music Modernization Act] so that songwriters and legacy artists receive their fair share."



Additional Recording Academy members who testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee include GRAMMY-winning recording artist, songwriter, and producer Smokey Robinson, as well as GRAMMY-winning country songwriter Josh Kear.

"The Academy is pleased with the increased interest and dedication Congress has shown toward fixing outdated music copyright laws," said Recording Academy President/CEO Neil Portnow. "Music creators have long felt the impact of these outdated laws. Today's hearing demonstrates that Congress stands with them in recognizing the importance and urgency of creating a licensing framework that reflects our 21st-century marketplace."

2018 has been a landmark year for music copyright reform. In January, coinciding with GRAMMY Week, the House Judiciary Committee held its first music-focused field hearing in New York, focusing on music copyright issues. Citing how current copyright law affects music creators, witnesses urged the committee to work to update copyright standards. Following the hearing, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) and Ranking Member Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.) introduced H.R. 5447– Music Modernization Act, which was unanimously passed by the House of Representatives on April 25.

Now under consideration in the Senate, this bill is a victory for all music creators. Harmonizing the music industry with one comprehensive piece of legislation, it aligns copyright law with the new music ecosystem, a position advocated by the Recording Academy since 2014, when Portnow testified before Congress.

ABOUT THE RECORDING ACADEMY

Best known for the GRAMMY Awards®, the Recording Academy is the only organization that exists to champion the voices of performers, songwriters, producers, and engineers. With no corporate members, the Recording Academy directly and solely represents music creators, working tirelessly to protect their rights and interests. From strong representation in Washington, to mobilizing the industry and organizing grassroots movements across all 50 states, we use advocacy, education, and dialogue to raise awareness about pressing music issues, develop policy, and advance key legislation. Our purpose is to give back to music makers by making sure that they're compensated fairly for their work today and have greater opportunities to prosper tomorrow.

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