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U.S. Creative Industries Highlight International Challenges to Copyright Protection and Market Access. IIPA Recommends Eight Countries for USTR's Priority Watch List and 11 More for Watch List.

Washington, D.C.—Leading American creative industries today urged the United States government to boost U.S. economic growth and job creation and retention by ensuring our trading partners provide high standards for copyright protection and market access for American music, movies, television, literary works, video games, and other copyrighted materials. The International Intellectual Property Alliance® (IIPA®), in its annual comments to the Office of U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) in the “Special 301” process, demonstrated the importance of strong copyright laws and effective enforcement measures in foreign markets. Likewise, ensuring that these countries eliminate other discriminatory and restrictive barriers to their marketplaces will increase the already substantial contributions of the creative industries to the digital economy in the United States and around the world. While some benefits of the creative economy cannot be quantified, such as cultural enrichment, a recent report that measured the creative industries’ contributions to the U.S. economy found the following:

- Over \$2 trillion in economic output;
- Over 11.6 million well-paying American jobs, or 6.10% of total domestic private employment; and
- Significant contributions to the U.S. digital economy, including over \$1.32 trillion of value added (51.39% of the entire U.S. digital economy) and over 49.1% of employment in the digital economy, even though the U.S. government’s definition of the digital economy does not encompass the full range of the copyright industries’ digital activities.

IIPA’s submission focuses on several key markets and makes the following recommendations. For the 2026 Special 301 **Priority Watch List**, IIPA recommends eight countries: Chile, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico (OCR), Russian Federation, South Africa, and Vietnam. For the **Watch List** IIPA recommends 11 countries: Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Morocco, Nigeria, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Uruguay.

IIPA Executive Director Kevin M. Rosenbaum stated: “As new forms of piracy and market access barriers emerge in the online marketplace, the Special 301 process remains critical to identify the improvements key U.S. trading partners need to make to enhance the growth and competitiveness of the creative industries and to ensure strong copyright frameworks to enable free market licensing of creative content. IIPA encourages the U.S. government to utilize trade tools such as Special 301 to open markets around the world, thereby strengthening the U.S. economy and improving the U.S. trade balance. Ensuring our trading partners improve their copyright legal and enforcement frameworks will result in the creation of more American jobs, which in turn boosts U.S. economic output.”

Rosenbaum concluded, “Since Special 301 was first initiated in 1989, IIPA has highlighted the need for foreign governments to improve copyright protection and enforcement while eliminating market access barriers. Progress on these issues becomes even more critical as technologies used to produce and disseminate creative content evolve. IIPA commends USTR and its interagency partners for their ongoing efforts to make full use of the Special 301 process to promote positive change for the creative industries.”

The full report and more materials can be found at <https://iipa.org/reports/special-301-reports/>. For more information, contact IIPA at (202) 968-4472 or at info@iipa.org.

About the IIPA: IIPA is a private sector coalition, formed in 1984, of trade associations representing U.S. copyright-based industries working to improve copyright protection and enforcement abroad and to open foreign markets closed by piracy and other market access barriers. Members of the IIPA include Association of American Publishers (<https://publishers.org>), Entertainment Software Association (www.thesa.com), Independent Film & Television Alliance (www.ifta-online.org), Motion Picture Association (www.motionpictures.org), and Recording Industry Association of America (www.riaa.com). Collectively, IIPA’s five member associations represent over 3,200 U.S. companies producing and distributing copyrightable content. The materials produced and/or distributed by IIPA-member companies include: video games for consoles, handheld devices, personal computers, and online; motion pictures and television programming distributed in all formats (including cinema, television, online, mobile, DVD, etc.); music recorded in all formats (from digital files to CDs and vinyl) for streaming and other online services, as well as broadcasting, public performance, and synchronization in audiovisual materials; and fiction and non-fiction books, educational, instructional and assessment materials, and professional and scholarly journals, and databases.