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Personal Technology Freedom Coalition Created

Industry, Academic, Public Interest Groups Support Bill To Improve Consumer Rights and Protect Technological Innovation

A broad group of organizations and companies representing diverse sectors of the U.S. economy has come together to form a new organization, the Personal Technology Freedom Coalition.

With members ranging from the telephone industry to high-tech firms, libraries, universities and the public-interest sector, the Coalition is committed to repairing recent damage dealt to the Founders' original commitment to balanced copyright protection. Specifically, the Coalition will press for consumer protections in the use of digital music and movies, including working to ensure that consumers can legally use and have access to digital content they have purchased.

The group supports the right of inventors to improve upon technologies already on the market, in particular the right of researchers to protect the nation from the threat of cyber terror. Members also support parents' rights to use modern filtering technologies to protect their children from inappropriate materials in the privacy of their own homes.

The group strongly supports the Digital Media Consumers' Rights Act (H.R. 107), legislation introduced by Rep. Rick Boucher, D-Va., and John Doolittle, R-Calif.

The Coalition upholds the following principles:

- Freedom. The Constitution gives us the freedom to enjoy and make many uses of books, music and other materials without permission of others... From these uses come new works that benefit us all.
- Fairness. The big media companies want to control every aspect of how we use digital music and video. That's not fair. The Constitution demands respect for users' rights.

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- Innovation. New technologies cannot develop unless engineers can study what has already been written or invented. By limiting the examination of products now, we limit what will be produced later.
- CyberSecurity. Anti-terror efforts depend on secure computer networks. We will never be secure if researchers cannot test those networks for flaws in the first place.

Below is a list of the coalition members, as of June 22, 2004:

American Association of Law Libraries
American Foundation for the Blind
American Library Association
Association of American Universities
Association of Research Libraries
BellSouth
Computer & Communications Industry Association
Consumer Electronics Association
Consumers Union
Digital Future Coalition
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Gateway
Home Recording Rights Coalition
Intel Corp.
Medical Library Association
National Writers Union
Open Source and Industry Alliance
Philips Consumer Electronics North America
Public Knowledge
Qwest
SBC
Special Libraries Association
Sun Microsystems
Telecommunications Industry Association
United States Student Association
United States Telecom Association
Verizon