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RIAA Blog: Forward Progress On Free Trade

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There have been some encouraging developments and [signs of progress](#) on the free trade front in the last few days. Consideration of implementing legislation for the Korea, Colombia and Panama free trade agreements will take place before the Senate Finance Committee tomorrow (June 30). Hopefully these long-stalled and vital pacts are on their way to becoming law soon.

For the music community and broader U.S. economy, this potential breakthrough and the eventual adoption of these agreements are essential. They will enhance the protection of intellectual property, lower market access barriers to U.S. creative products and services, and promote legitimate electronic commerce. We hope that Congress will move as quickly as possible to bring them into force.

America's music sector has been badly affected by traditional and digital theft for decades. Today we face a problem of unprecedented scale. While the digital revolution has created new ways for us to reach consumers with compelling products and content, this same technology has also facilitated the work of those who profit from stealing ideas, innovation and creativity. Achieving enhanced global standards of copyright protection and enforcement, ensuring meaningful market access, and developing trade disciplines that keep pace with technological development are all central to our ability to remain competitive and to continue to ensure good jobs for America's creative community.

The Korea, Colombia and Panama FTA's succeed in helping to address these challenges in ways that set important precedents for future free trade agreements. They provide modern standards of copyright protection for the digital age, and require the parties to ensure that protection is meaningful in practice through effective enforcement. In short, we strongly support these agreements, and hope that Congress will ratify them as quickly as possible. More broadly, we strongly support continuing efforts to pursue simultaneous liberalization and the strengthening intellectual property protections through bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade negotiations. For decades, the expansion of trade and the protection of intellectual property have been cornerstones of a bipartisan economic policy. The ability of our country to lead -- and the ability of U.S. companies to create employment -- will depend upon our continued success.

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