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Statement by Senator Ron Wyden
Objecting to Unanimous Consent to Proceed to the Combating Online Infringement and
Counterfeits Act

November 29, 2010

Consistent with Senate Standing Orders and my policy of publishing in the *Congressional Record* a statement whenever I place a hold on legislation, I am announcing my intention to object to any unanimous consent request to proceed to S. 3804, the Combating Online Infringement and Counterfeits Act (COICA).

Promoting American innovation, and securing its protection, is vital to creating new, good-paying jobs. But it is important that the government reach an appropriate balance between protecting intellectual property and promoting innovation on the one hand and the freedom to innovate, share expression, and promote ideas over the Internet. I am concerned that the current version of COICA has this balance wrong; it attempts to protect intellectual property in the digital arena in a way that could trample free speech and stifle competition and important new innovations in the digital economy.

Of perhaps greater concern, the sweeping new powers offered to the U.S. Department of Justice under COICA are granted without giving due consideration to the consequences. COICA may not only be ineffective at combating copyright infringement and the distribution of counterfeit goods, it gives license to foreign regimes to further censor and filter online content to serve protectionist commercial motives and repressive political aims. Until these issues are thoroughly considered and properly addressed, I will object to a unanimous consent request to proceed to the legislation.

I yield the floor.

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