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INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION HEADS TO PRESIDENT BUSH TO SIGN

WASHINGTON – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) and his colleagues in the Senate unanimously passed legislation designed to address intellectual property rights enforcement concerns and to protect American innovation and advancement. The legislation was introduced in July by Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Ranking Member Arlen Specter (R-PA). The Judiciary Committee reported the measure earlier this month. After constant negotiations in the Senate, and with the House of Representatives and the Administration, the bill was amended and passed Friday. The House of Representatives passed the measure on Sunday 381 - 41. It now heads to the president for his signature.

The legislation would provide increased resources for Department of Justice programs to combat intellectual property theft, and provide coordination and strategic planning of federal efforts against counterfeiting and piracy.

“The Bush administration has done little to protect one of our country’s most vital strategic and economic interests – our intellectual property,” said **Senator Cardin, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee**. “It has cost our nation at least \$200 billion and an estimated 750,000 jobs. I believe the *Prioritizing Resources and Organization for Intellection Property* will provide the teeth our law enforcement agencies need to clamp down on those that engage in this illegal conduct.”

Chairman Leahy, who led negotiations about the legislation after the Committee reported the measure, said, “We have worked together, and we have worked hard, to craft a bipartisan, bicameral bill that addresses the concerns of the many stakeholders, the administration, and the House of Representatives. Intellectual property makes up some of the most valuable, and most vulnerable, property we have. We need to do more to protect it from theft and abuse if we hope to continue being a world leader in innovation. If we make better and stronger efforts to combat counterfeiting and piracy, we will also enjoy more jobs, greater returns on productivity, and more taxes being paid, rather than having infringers and thieves enjoy the financial gains of wrongdoing. I hope with the short time left in this Congress, the House of Representatives can report this important, bipartisan legislation, and that the President will support Congressional efforts to protect American innovation.”

Senator Cardin, along with fellow Judiciary Committee Members Orrin Hatch (R-UT), and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) joined as co-sponsors to the *Prioritizing Resources and Organization for Intellection Property (S. 3325)* introduced by Senators Leahy and Specter with Senators Evan Bayh (D-IN), George Voinovich (R-OH), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) and John

Cornyn (R-TX). Additional Senate co-sponsors include Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY), Kit Bond (R-MO), Carl Levin (D-MI), Bob Corker (R-TN), Charles Schumer, (D-NY), Lindsey Graham (R-SC), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Judd Gregg (R-NH), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), and Gordon Smith (R-OR).

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