

## **IP Enforcement Bill Draws Praise From U.S. Businesses**

*Legislation would give the State Department additional resources and training for intellectual property enforcement efforts in foreign countries.*

By K.C. Jones

Information Week

May 19, 2009

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is backing federal legislation that would give the U.S. State Department more resources and training for intellectual property enforcement efforts in foreign countries.

"Protecting job-creating intellectual property abroad is a critical part of our relationships with other countries," Mark Esper, executive VP of the Chamber's Global Intellectual Property Center, said in a statement released Monday. "This particular proposal recognizes that dedicated officials and resources are necessary for effective IP protection and enforcement, and we are committed to seeing this measure become law."

House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Howard Berman has introduced legislation to combat violations in countries that don't meet international obligations to protect IP. The bill, H.R. 2410, aims to enhance U.S. foreign policy efforts by improving IP enforcement. Also called the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY 2010-2011, the bill authorizes 10 IP diplomatic specialists in U.S. embassies and diplomatic missions. The specialists would work with foreign governments, rights holders, and U.S. leaders.

The Chamber said that the U.S. IP market employs almost 18 million people and generates more than half of all American exports. The World Customs Organization reports that IP theft causes the loss of \$500 billion to \$600 billion in annual revenue worldwide.

"We applaud Chairman Berman and his committee's efforts to tackle job-destroying IP theft by putting more focus on the international roots of these crimes against the rights of American innovators and creators," Esper said.

The Chamber represents more than 3 million businesses. Its Global Intellectual Property Center works worldwide to promote and protect IP.