

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty](#)  
**Subject:** musician/songwriter  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 23, 2010 11:07:28 AM

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Dear Ms. Espinel,

I'm excited to hear of your confirmation and very pleased that the Obama administration has recognized the importance of protecting the intellectual property rights of American citizens, both as a means of insuring their domestic livelihoods and their competitiveness abroad.

As a writing and performing musician, I have seen my industry virtually collapse in the past decade as a result of rampant digitization and uncontrolled exchange of information via the internet. Many have seen this as a necessary step toward downsizing and eliminating the massively inefficient practices of a recording industry that had become bloated, lazy and complacent. And there is much merit to that point of view.

However, the reality for individual artists is that the value of their recorded output has been severely devalued to the point that younger listeners feel little if no obligation to purchase music that is so immediately and freely accessible with a high-speed internet connection. I have even heard people say who own older copies of albums on LP or CD claim that it is often faster for them to download a recording via a file-sharing website than it is for them to search their own physical collection for their own purchased copy.

All of this is to say, that the way Americans acquire, own and maintain access to bodies of music has changed radically, and it seems there will be no turning back to an old system wherein someone purchases an album, keeps it in their home and retrieves it when they want to listen to it. People demand access to enormous amounts of recorded information from their remote devices at any location where they may be. Music aggregators, subscription services, new user sharing arrangements etc. are all in a state of constant flux and refinement. And the government has yet to weigh in heavily.

The primary concern of most listeners at this point (more so than fidelity or physicality or integrity in the form of artwork, credits) is convenience. And the government can play a role here by insuring that the most convenient means of procuring, sharing and remotely accessing archives of recorded material are those that do not completely negate the value of that content and the obligation to compensate its creators in some way. Recorded music is in danger of being rendered completely free and disposable, the equivalent of a commercial or advertisement. And it doesn't have to be this way. Something that has been one of the United States' most valuable cultural exports for the past century should not simply obsolesce in the name of deregulation and free exchange of information. We can find a solution that maximizes the freedoms of listeners without completely devaluing the work of the creators who make those experiences possible.

Thank you,

J. Wise