

Tech Industry Opposes Possible FM Chip Mandate for Mobile Devices

A coalition of six technology industry associations sent a letter today to the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the U.S. House and Senate Judiciary Committees urging them to resist efforts to include an FM technology mandate for mobile devices in any legislation addressing an unrelated conflict between the broadcast and recording industries over royalties.

Calls for an FM chip mandate are not about public safety but are instead about propping up a business which consumers are abandoning as they avail themselves of new, more consumer-friendly options," the associations wrote. "It is simply wrong for two entrenched industries to resolve their differences by agreeing to burden a third industry - which has no relationship to or other interest in the performance royalty dispute - with a costly, ill-considered and unnecessary new mandate."

The proposed imposition of an FM chip mandate is not necessary for resolution of the dispute between performance artists and broadcasters and, if adopted, it would be bad policy for several reasons:

- Mandating that every wireless device include an FM chip would require consumers to pay more for a function that they may not desire or ever use.
- The groups that are parties to the discussions over the performance rights royalty issue lack any expertise in the development of wireless devices and are in no position to dictate what type of functionality is included in a wireless device.
- Development by the technology industry and government of a mobile broadcast emergency alerting system makes the requirement unnecessary.

The following Presidents and Chief Executive Officers of CTIA-The Wireless Association®, the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)®, the Information Technology Industry Council, the Rural Cellular Association, TechAmerica and the Telecommunications Industry Association signed the letter.

To see a copy of the letter, go to: http://files.ctia.org/pdf/Leahy_Conyers_Letter.pdf

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