



Future of Music Coalition Statement on the Protecting Lawful Streaming Act of 2020

Yesterday, Senator Thom Tillis (R-NC) released text of a proposed piece of legislation dealing with the problem of large-scale infringing commercial streaming services. The “Protecting Lawful Streaming Act of 2020” would create felony penalties for illicit digital transmission services.

The following can be attributed to Kevin Erickson, director of Future of Music Coalition:

For 20 years, FMC has worked to ground debates about copyright and the internet in the lived experience of diverse music creators. We want to see a flourishing of legal, licensed services with diverse business models that allow for creators to connect with audiences on their own terms, and to be fairly compensated for their creative labor. To that end, we’re always looking for common-ground solutions.

Infringing commercial streaming services don’t just hurt creators and copyright holders—they distort the marketplace for creative works and make it more difficult for more diverse licensed streaming services to get off the ground with sustainable pricing models. Consumers are harmed, because they are left with fewer choices.

In the past, FMC opposed certain controversial copyright-related proposals because of concerns about overly broad language that could have had unintended consequences for expression online. Those concerns simply don’t apply to this new bill, which appropriately targets bad-faith businesses, not end users or individual streamers. Senator Tillis’ bill is a cleanly drafted and focused solution to a recurrent problem. We look forward to its swift passage.

Contact: Kevin Erickson. kevin@futureofmusic.org. 202.822.2051