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MULTI INDUSTRY LETTER URGES IP PROTECTION AND RAISES COUNTERFEIT CONCERNS AS IMMEDIATE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION PRIORITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A cross-industry group of representatives of U.S. manufacturers and owners of intellectual property (IP) rights Dec. 19 sent a **letter to President-elect Donald Trump** to recognize his commitment to protecting American businesses, consumers, and national security by cracking down on the illicit trafficking of counterfeit goods.

The cross-industry co-signers include the Alliance for Automotive Innovation (AAI), American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA), Anti-Counterfeiting Educational Foundation (ACEF), Automotive Anti-Counterfeiting Council (A2C2), Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM), Communications Cable and Connectivity Association (CCCA), Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA), Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America (FDRA), MEMA - The Vehicle Suppliers Association, Personal Care Products Council, Sentinel Connector Systems, Sports & Fitness Industry Association, The International Anti-Counterfeiting Coalition (IACC), The Toy Association, and TIC Council.

The group outlines immediate considerations for the first 100 days of President-elect Trump's Administration. Trade in counterfeit products is considered a high-risk area that threatens America's innovation economy, the competitiveness of businesses, and the livelihoods of U.S. workers. In some cases, it also poses risks to national security and the health and safety of consumers.

The letter applauds previous Trump Administration actions, including the 2019 Memorandum on Combating Trafficking in Counterfeit and Pirated Goods which resulted in the interagency report issued by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), developed because "...illicit activity impacts American innovation and erodes the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers and workers."

It provides several recommendations on steps the Administration can take to establish a strong foundation for IP protection, including:

- Nominate and support the confirmation of critical Administration positions key to protecting and enforcing intellectual property (IP) rights:
- An Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator (IPEC) to oversee and coordinate IP enforcement actions and policies across the Administration.
 - An Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), to protect IP and drive innovative digital policies for creators and innovators.
 - The Commissioner for U.S. Customs and Border Protection has already been nominated. CBP has designated the protection of IP rights as a Priority Trade Issue (PTI).
- Convene an Interagency Working Group to Fight Against Illicit Trade, Protect IP, and Eradicate Counterfeits to combat the trafficking of counterfeits and other infringing products within the first 100 days to connect (at least quarterly) with stakeholders.
- Resume steps to implement recommended actions outlined in the 2020 DHS report on Combating Trafficking in Counterfeit and Pirated Goods.
- Evaluate actions for holistic counterfeit prevention with Executive Orders, Regulation, and/or needed Policy Changes.
- Support passage of the SHOP SAFE Act as introduced [H.R.8684 / S. 2934] in the 118th Congress to incentivize e-commerce platforms to improve their systems to detect and prevent the sale of counterfeit products.

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