

## Group Urges U.S. Congress to Punish Brazil for Piracy

Contributed by Newsroom  
Wednesday, 13 April 2005

Defenders of Property Rights today submitted a letter calling on the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means to recognize Brazil as a serious offender of intellectual property rights.

The Committee, which is scheduled to hold hearings on U.S.-China economic relations this Thursday, April 14th, will take China to task over its failure to comply with requirements as part of its new membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO), including its record of intellectual property rights abuses.

DPR has issued a letter to Ways and Means Chairman Bill Thomas (R-CA 22nd), urging the Committee to also confront Brazil on its record which, according to the International Intellectual Property Alliance (IIPA), cost American businesses an estimated US\$ 900 million in losses in 2003 alone.

Brazil, one of America's largest trading partners, exported goods valued at US\$21.3 billion in 2003 to the U.S., of which, 14 percent enjoyed duty-free status.

In January 2001, due to a petition from the IIPA for a chronic lack of enforcement of copyright laws, the United States Trade Representative (USTR) placed Brazil on the Special 301 Watchlist.

On April 4th of this year, USTR gave Brazil six months to reverse its intellectual property abuses or lose its favored trade status with the United States. In spite of this warning from the USTR, just days ago, Brazil's government formally announced that it would seize the patents of several major U.S. drug companies.

"Brazil's intellectual property abuses are alarmingly short-sighted. They not only harm American businesses but hinder investment, innovation and development in Brazil," said Nancie Marzulla, president of Defenders of Property Rights.

"Brazil's intellectual property rights abuses under President Lula threaten the strength and growth of the American economy."

China and Brazil have become increasingly close allies when it comes to intellectual property abuses. On March 24th China announced its support for Brazilian Luiz Felipe Seixas Correa to become the next head of the World Trade Organization, saying he would "fight for the interests of developing countries as the new head of the WTO."

Defenders of Property Rights was founded in 1991 to counterbalance the governmental threat to private property as a result of a broad range of regulations.

Defenders believes that society can achieve important social objectives such as protection of the environment and preservation of national heritage without destroying private property rights or undermining free market principles.

Defenders of Property Rights  
[www.yourpropertyrights.org](http://www.yourpropertyrights.org)

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