

## **Online Piracy Bills Debated**

This week two federal online piracy bills garnered significant media attention when a number of popular websites went dark in opposition to the legislation. The bills, the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) H.R. 3261 and the Protect IP Act (PIPA) S. 968 are intended to address the problem of foreign websites that facilitate the downloading of digital content like movies and music. Opponents fear that the legislation could be a threat to free speech and place an unreasonable burden on websites to police the links placed on their sites. In light of widespread internet protests this week, the bills sponsors in the House and Senate have delayed further consideration of their legislation until a consensus can be reached on how to move forward.

Real Estate professionals create valuable content/intellectual property that is increasingly distributed on the internet. That content must be carefully protected from theft in a manner that does not create unintended consequences or undue compliance burdens.

NAR has taken no position on these bills at this time. We are carefully weighing the need to protect our members' intellectual property while avoiding potentially harmful unintended consequences.

We are working through our policy committee process to determine our position on this issue.