

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty](#)  
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So ultimately I understand that Intellectual Property (IP) is completely different from copyright, but I know copyright is a very important aspect. And while I understand the concepts behind why IP is necessary for economic reasons the term lengths of exclusivity, and the idea that you can patent software, are both serious issues that need to be addressed.

Currently copyright lasts until 70 years after the author is dead. That means if an author dies today, the public won't have access to the information until I'm long since gone, 2080, what purpose does the state have in guarding Britney Spear's work in 2079? The state shouldn't be protecting the exclusive rights to anything for that long, it's no longer protecting economic interests, but depriving ideas of oxygen. The initial limits were 14 years with the possibility of one renewal in 1790, I strongly feel if you can't come up with one new idea in 28 years you have no reason to be in business, and if you want more time you should have to prove to the state why they need such protection. Our IP laws should reflect how fast our society moves with the internet, we cannot expect to force generations of Americans to live in a world where every idea flowing through your head is...patent pending.

It's laughable to patent software, something anyone else can create if they have enough programmers, you could change one small piece of the code and no longer "break" IP law so the entire patent game needs to be removed as a burden to companies. Too many companies patent millions of small ideas never planning to do anything with them, just wait for other companies to make the system profitable and sue them out of existence. The entire process is useless, and only benefits companies that hire the most lawyers, which hurts every aspect of the business if you constantly have to defend programs you've created from people who patented the idea in a more basic form. You want to help small businesses? Take away the need for a team of lawyers to release a video game, economic boom!

I think there needs to be an important line drawn in the sand, that physical objects are vastly different from digital items. To copy something on the internet is to fulfill the purpose of the internet and computers, and consumers should not fear retribution if their only goal was to advance themselves in some way (hello libraries). The focus needs to be on the people causing the real problems, the people profiting off other's copyrighted work (a more sensible copyright with real term limits) and those creating harmful products. Consumers are not your enemy, they are simply acting on behalf of their needs, consumers want digital items and if the company refuses to adapt to what the consumer wants, the consumer will find another way. You can block all internet traffic everywhere and people will still break copyright law, you'd have to change the fundamental structure of the internet to stop all "pirates", so why not work with them? While some will always seek free content, I believe their reasons for breaking the law have some merit to them, like the idea that DRM is overreaching and the law is still not allowing us backups or access to information we buy. I could buy a video game, but the DRM could render the game useless or worse, break the computer. I could buy a DVD, but the unpassable menus and constant FBI warnings make piracy more appealing. I'm not saying breaking the law is right, but unless you understand why they break the law you'll never find ways to stop them.

If you want to use tax payer money better, dissolve any attempts to stop information from being shared on the internet (like the ACTA), because that's not the problem, the problem is companies who hoard IP like some kind of commodity. USE IT OR LOSE IT. If you have no interest in pursuing some kind of economic answer to your idea you should lose the right to exclusively profit from it. Then let this "free market" work to drive down costs and expand capabilities. Imagine what the world would be like if some software company owned MP3, and forced every user to pay a fine before the ability use it, now imagine if they had that right until the 22nd century, and you'll get a sense of why some people participate in civil disobedience of most IP law. People will write free software for free, and people get paid for it, and while I understand the concept of protecting these ideas, it's hurt small businesses from being able to compete. They could have the best product in the world, but find out that Verizon patented their idea a year ago but never did anything with it, which defeats the entire purpose of protecting these ideas.

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Chris