

30/01/2018

The Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
By email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

Re: Copyright Amendment (Service Providers) Bill 2017

Optus supports tech start-ups in Australia and urges government to extend safe harbour to online platforms.

Successive government reviews since 2005 have identified the need for this reform. The Government expressly agreed with the need to fix the scheme in its 2014 Online Copyright Infringement Discussion Paper.

Extending safe harbour is critical to Australia's digital future:

- These changes will bring Australia into line with many of our major trading partners, including the US, UK, Singapore, South Korea and Japan. This will give local start-ups a fair go against the competition;
- Safe harbour creates more jobs: Google, Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, Reddit and Pinterest employ over 90,000 people directly but these platforms don't base their operations in Australia because of our outdated copyright laws;
- Importantly safe harbour helps prevent piracy and protects content creators by providing a clear framework to take down pirate content in a fast, easy and affordable way. This in turn makes it harder to access illegal content which is good for content creators;
- Lastly, as the Australian Information Industry Association points out, the economic impact on Australian content creators cannot be reduced by limiting safe harbour in Australia because most Australian content is hosted on platforms that already operate within other safe harbour regimes. Limiting safe harbour only serves to discourage innovation without a corresponding benefit to content creators.

In light of the recent anniversary of the National Innovation and Science Agenda, we call on the Australian government to support this reform because we're serious about growing Australian innovation together.

Yours sincerely

Dermot McCann

State Director for NSW - Optus