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ACTA - Anti-counterfeiting agreement

EP must move forward and torpedo ACTA once and for all

The European Parliament's trade committee, the lead committee in the ratification process for the controversial Anti-counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), will today debate ACTA and the recommendation by the EP rapporteur to reject the agreement. The debate comes a day after the EU's data protection supervisor raised concerns with ACTA (1) and ahead of the vote in the EP trade committee, which is now scheduled for the end of May.

The Greens/EFA group has opposed ACTA since the outset, highlighting concerns about the fundamental rights, internet freedom, freedom of establishment and access to medicines, as well as the sweeping approach to intellectual property enforcement. The group is clearly in favour of rejecting ACTA and underlined its support for the recommendation by the rapporteur, with Swedish MEP **Amelia Andersdotter** (Pirate Party) stating:

"We welcome the recommendation to reject ACTA. The agreement should never have been concluded in the first place given the serious concerns about its one-size-fits all approach to IP enforcement, its potentially far-reaching provisions and the shadowy negotiation process. The EP must now move swiftly forward with the ratification process and torpedo ACTA once and for all. The next key step in this process will be the trade committee's vote at the end of May and we urge MEPs from all groups to vote against the agreement.

"Yesterday, the EU's data protection supervisor became the latest in a long line of experts, legal analysts and stakeholders to raise concerns with ACTA. In addition to concerns about data protection and internet freedom, there are widespread concerns about the potentially far-reaching implications of ACTA on fundamental rights, freedom of establishment and access to vital medicines. At EU-level, ACTA would block the much-needed reform of EU copyright law and instead lead to a heavy-handed and repressive enforcement of copyright with no regard to either the basic rights of citizens or the needs of European digital entrepreneurs.

"For these and other reasons, the Greens believe ACTA as it stands should be scrapped. Intellectual property enforcement cannot entail a sweeping approach, instead there is a need to assess the different challenges facing different economic sectors and different aspects of intellectual property and develop individual solutions for these sectors."

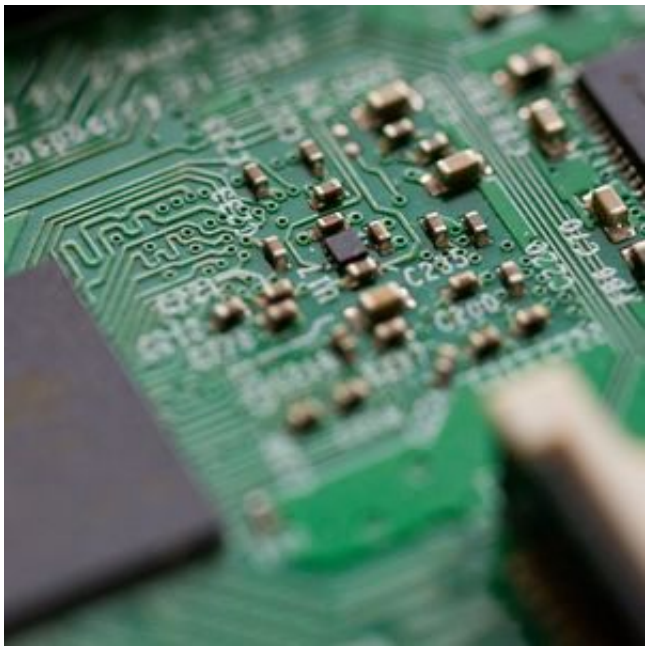
(1) See the press statement by the EDPS (pdf):
http://www.edps.europa.eu/EDPSWEB/webdav/site/mySite/shared/Documents/EDPS/PressNews/Press/2012/EDPS-2012-09_ACTA_EN.pdf

and the full report (pdf):
http://www.edps.europa.eu/EDPSWEB/webdav/site/mySite/shared/Documents/Consultation/Opinions/2012/12-04-24_ACTA_EN.pdf

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