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ACTA rejection welcomed

Press Release from SNP MEP Alyn Smith

SNP MEP **Alyn Smith** has today (Thursday) hailed a vote to reject the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) in the European Parliament's Industry Committee (ITRE), of which he is the only Scots member.

The committee vote was for the adoption of a draft opinion by Alyn's group colleague Amelia Andersdotter MEP. The opinion of the committee is a significant development as it will pave the way for the final vote in Plenary, scheduled for July.

Alyn said:

"I am delighted my committee has voted to adopt a clear, precise and unambiguous opinion.

"The aim of the ACTA agreement, between the EU, the US, Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and Switzerland, is to strengthen the enforcement of intellectual property rights and to help to combat counterfeiting and piracy of goods such as clothing of luxury brands, music, and films. All of this is a worthy enough aim, but ACTA ignores what it was designed to achieve. We need to see improvement in the area of copyright and patent enforcement without the impairment of civil liberties and access to information and medicines.

"At EU-Level, ACTA would block much-needed reform of EU copywright law and instead lead to a heavy-handed and repressive enforecement of copywright with no regard to either the basic rights of citizens or the needs of European digital entrepreneurs.

"Intellectual property enforcement cannot entail a sweeping approach. There is a need to asses the different challenges.

"It is fantantasic to see the European Parliament deliver a further blow to ACTA. Given the weight of public and political opposition to this problematic agreement, I hope that the EP will be able to finish off ACTA before the summer, with a final vote taking place next month."

ENDS

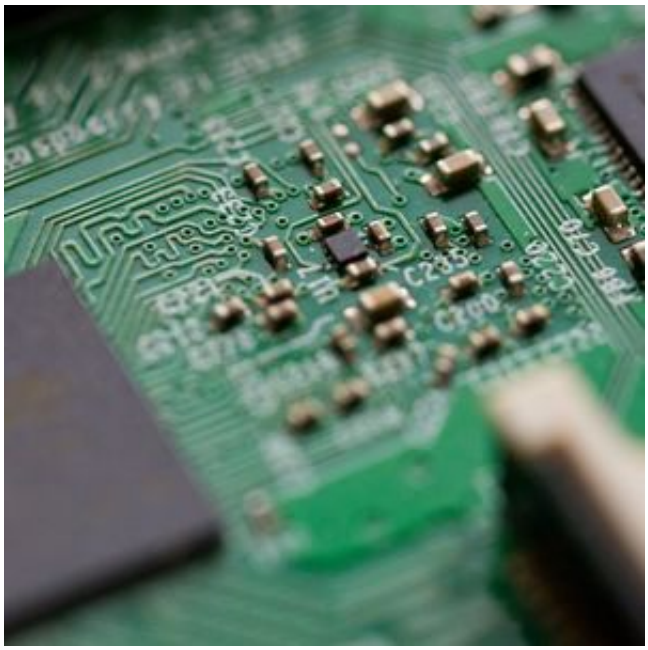
Note to Editors:

* In Industry Committee (ITRE) voted on Greens/EFA MEP Amelia Andersdottir's opinion to reject ACTA- it was adopted 29 votes in favour, 25 votes against.
* The ITRE vote coincided with votes in the Legal Affairs Committee and the Civil Liberties Committee today, with both Committees also voting against ACTA.
* The lead EP trade committee will vote on its report on 21 June. This will then be referred to the plenary of the European Parliament for a final vote on whether or not to give consent to the agreement.

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