

Testimony of

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TESTIMONY OF ANITA BAKER

BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
UNITED STATES SENATE
ON
PARITY, PLATFORMS AND PROTECTION: THE FUTURE OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY IN THE DIGITAL RADIO
REVOLUTION

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Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for inviting me to testify before you today.

I will be brief. I have something really simple to say: artists should be fairly compensated by the businesses that distribute their music.

I've heard recently about a number of new services that radio companies are planning on offering. Satellite radio is planning on selling devices that allow their listeners to find and record individual songs and then create permanent libraries and playlists of those songs. So as XM says, their radio is not a "pod" but is the "mother ship." Traditional radio may be about to do something similar soon.

I think this is a great idea. I think it would be wonderful for consumers to have a new and even better way of listening to and using radio. As someone who listens to radio, I think it would be great to be able to record big blocks of music from the radio and then to pick individual songs out of it so I can keep them and listen to them later -- over and over.

And I think it would be great to one day be able to tell my computer or radio to beep and tell me the minute the next new Bonnie Raitt single gets played. And I would love to be driving in my car, listening to a song and then to hit a button and immediately save that whole song.

All of these technologies are exciting and tremendous ways for connecting music with fans.

However, I hope this Committee considers -- and supports -- legislation that recognizes that the folks who bring music to life need some consistency. We need to know, as these technologies develop with the mind-blowing ability to stockpile music, build huge libraries and/or make it all portable, -- that the people who create music are fairly compensated and with some logic and sense. And this doesn't just affect me, the artist whose name the public knows. It affects my entire "family" that I work with - the songwriters, musicians, producers and engineers who have always made music great.

So I hope this Committee understands that I support radio and listeners being able to do this. I've spoken with EMI and Blue Note - two of the companies that work with me - and they have promised me they support this too. I just happen to think that when a radio station is acting like a download service that the artist should be paid appropriately.

I am also glad to be able to say that many of my fellow artists groups like the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, the Rhythm and Blues Foundation, AFM, AFTRA, the Recording Artist Coalition, and the Songwriters Guild support my view.

I'm not here to talk about whether the music industry has done a good job dealing with the digital revolution. A lot of that is ancient history. And it's time to get over it and move forward. I hope this Committee can help resolve this matter.