

SAA Representative to WIPO
Statement on Archival Issues Involved in Proposal for an Exclusive Right for Broadcasting
Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights

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On behalf of the Society of American Archivists, North America's largest organization of archivists, we want to commend you for your continued wise chairmanship of the SCCR, and to thank the Secretariat for its excellent support for the Committee's work.

For decades, archives have included not just paper records but also important sound and video recordings, many of which have come from broadcasters. These have been invaluable documents for connecting society with its past. Try to think of a major event of the past 50 years—the fall of the Berlin Wall or the collapse of the Twin Towers on September 11 without the video images that were created. These are the documents that will provide the stuff of history for future users of archives.

Thus, regardless of whatever measures are put into place to provide the signal protection that broadcasters may need, it is of great importance to archives that the new rights do not add any further layers on the already existing copyright protection that exists in the content.

Over the long passage of time that archives have to span, and given the vagaries of fortune for all business and institutions which disappear with regularity, adding a new right on the content of broadcast signals would simply add immeasurably to the orphan works problem for archives in preserving and providing access to this documentary sector that is such an important part of society's historical record.