



Jeff Thurnau, patent counsel for Gates Corp. and a BPC member, testifying before the Senate Judiciary Committee on June 17. (Photo courtesy Risdon Photography)

MEMA Supports Strong Anti-Counterfeiting Law in Statements to Congress

Representatives of MEMA and its Brand Protection Council (BPC) expressed support of legislation strengthening the nation’s anti-counterfeiting laws in both written comments and testimony delivered June 17 before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The association’s written comments to the committee urge increased coordination of Executive Branch Enforcement efforts and the inclusion of protections for trademarks, trade dress, patents, and copyrights in any IP enforcement legislation.

Jeff Thurnau, patent counsel for Gates Corp. and a BPC member, appeared before the Senate committee June 17 and urged passage of legislation that will strengthen the ability of motor vehicle suppliers to address a number of counterfeiting issues.

“Protection of Gates intellectual property is critical to the success of our high-end business model. Our aim is to continually develop the most innovative technology in our market sectors, patent the products that our technology creates, then lead the market in those sectors,” Thurnau said in his statement to the committee. “This approach allows us to create high wage, high skill jobs in America,” he added.

“For example, at Gates, we are developing a range of energy efficiency solutions that reduce the cost of operating motor vehicles that enhance our environment, and reduce dependency on foreign oil,” Thurnau said. “However, every time the integrity of our brand and technology is violated by intellectual property pirates our business model and technological leadership is under assault. Clearly, strong intellectual property protection benefits the Gates Corp., our communities, our customers, and ultimately the American people,” he added.

“MEMA is pleased to be at the forefront of the motor vehicle supplier industry’s efforts to combat counterfeiting and intellectual property rights violations, and speak before Congress on occasions such as this,” said Bob McKenna, president and CEO of MEMA, commenting on the association’s actions June 17. “Every year, counterfeiters steal companies’ good names and brand reputation – and put consumers at serious risk with unsafe, fake parts. The crime takes a huge toll on the motor vehicle parts industry, costing the global industry \$12 billion in lost sales and U.S. parts makers \$3 billion annually. Sales lost to counterfeiters also cost U.S.

manufacturing jobs – an estimated 200,000 to 250,000 American jobs,” he noted. “We urge the Senate to move forward with this legislation to protect consumers and American jobs.”

About BPC

The MEMA Brand Protection Council (BPC) is a membership peer-council of executives responsible for brand and intellectual property rights protection within their company. The Council focuses on best practices, solutions and information on counterfeit parts, black- and gray-marketed products and intellectual property issues. For more information, contact Jack Cameron, 919-406-8856 or jcameron@mema.org.

About MEMA

MEMA represents motor vehicle parts suppliers, the nation's largest manufacturing sector which directly employs 783,100 U.S. workers and contributes to 4.5 million private industry jobs across the country. Suppliers manufacture the parts and technology used in the domestic production of more than 11 million new cars and trucks produced each year, and the aftermarket products necessary to repair and maintain more than 247 million vehicles on the road June 17. MEMA supports its members through its three market segment associations, Automotive Aftermarket Suppliers Association (AASA), Heavy Duty Manufacturers Association (HDMA), and Original Equipment Suppliers Association (OESA). For more information on the motor vehicle parts supplier industry, visit www.mema.org or www.automotivesupplier.org.

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