

Ivy Council Resolution on Computer File Sharing

*Presented November 15 at the Ivy Council 2003 Fall Conference at Yale University
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The Ivy Council acknowledges that there is currently a serious problem in the United States with copyright infringement due to online file sharing, and that this behavior is especially pervasive on college and university campuses. For this reason the Ivy Council respects the desire of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) to curb the practice of file sharing among college students. In light of controversy surrounding this issue we offer the following statement:

WHEREAS according to The New York Times¹ there were over 11 million home computers in the United States actively sharing files in May of 2003, and

WHEREAS many experts have questioned the efficacy of using legal prohibition alone as a means to alter group behavior when the intended intervention contradicts broad public sentiment², and

WHEREAS Pennsylvania State University has recently developed a legal means of a downloading music for its students using university funds³, and

WHEREAS undergraduate students are typically in a position of financial and legal vulnerability and are without the support of a powerful political lobby, and

WHEREAS in April of 2003 the RIAA chose to prosecute four undergraduate students at three colleges, eventually forcing them to each render sums ranging from \$12,000 to \$17,000 over the course of three years, putting at least one student's education future in peril due to financial constraints⁴,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Ivy Council urges the administrators of the Ivy League colleges and universities to cooperate with the RIAA in investigating legal alternatives to file sharing on university campuses.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said administrators and the student governments of the Ivy League take further action to educate undergraduates on legal file sharing options.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Ivy Council urges the RIAA to pursue its legitimate interest of copyright protection without imposing on students a financial burden so great that it jeopardizes their pursuit of education.

¹ Harmon, Amy. "The Price of Music: The Overview; 261 Lawsuits Filed on Music Sharing." New York Times. 9 September 2003. A:1.

² Schwartz, John. "Despite Suits Music File Sharers Shrug Off Guilt and Keep File Sharing." New York Times. 9 September 2003. A:1.

Harmon, Amy. "The Price of Music: The Overview; 261 Lawsuits Filed on Music Sharing." New York Times. 9 September 2003. A:1.

³ Harmon, Amy. "Penn State Will Pay to Allow Students to Download Music." New York Times Late Edition. 7 November 2003. A:1.

⁴ Harmon, Amy. "Suit Settled for Students Downloading Music Online." New York Times. 2 May 2003. A:22.