

Public Law 107-321
107th Congress

An Act

Dec. 4, 2002
[H.R. 5469]

To amend title 17, United States Code, with respect to the statutory license for webcasting, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Small Webcaster
Settlement Act of
2002.
17 USC 101 note.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Small Webcaster Settlement Act of 2002”.

17 USC 114 note.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Some small webcasters who did not participate in the copyright arbitration royalty panel proceeding leading to the July 8, 2002 order of the Librarian of Congress establishing rates and terms for certain digital performances and ephemeral reproductions of sound recordings, as provided in part 261 of the Code of Federal Regulations (published in the Federal Register on July 8, 2002) (referred to in this section as “small webcasters”), have expressed reservations about the fee structure set forth in such order, and have expressed their desire for a fee based on a percentage of revenue.

(2) Congress has strongly encouraged representatives of copyright owners of sound recordings and representatives of the small webcasters to engage in negotiations to arrive at an agreement that would include a fee based on a percentage of revenue.

(3) The representatives have arrived at an agreement that they can accept in the extraordinary and unique circumstances here presented, specifically as to the small webcasters, their belief in their inability to pay the fees due pursuant to the July 8 order, and as to the copyright owners of sound recordings and performers, the strong encouragement of Congress to reach an accommodation with the small webcasters on an expedited basis.

(4) The representatives have indicated that they do not believe the agreement provides for or in any way approximates fair or reasonable royalty rates and terms, or rates and terms that would have been negotiated in the marketplace between a willing buyer and a willing seller.

(5) Congress has made no determination as to whether the agreement provides for or in any way approximates fair or reasonable fees and terms, or rates and terms that would have been negotiated in the marketplace between a willing buyer and a willing seller.

(6) Congress likewise has made no determination as to whether the July 8 order is reasonable or arbitrary, and nothing in this Act shall be taken into account by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in its review of such order.

(7) It is, nevertheless, in the public interest for the parties to be able to enter into such an agreement without fear of liability for deviating from the fees and terms of the July 8 order, if it is clear that the agreement will not be admissible as evidence or otherwise taken into account in any government proceeding involving the setting or adjustment of the royalties payable to copyright owners of sound recordings for the public performance or reproduction in ephemeral phonorecords or copies of such works, the determination of terms or conditions related thereto, or the establishment of notice or recordkeeping requirements.

SEC. 3. SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN PAYMENTS.

17 USC 114 note.

(a) NONCOMMERCIAL WEBCASTERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The payments to be made by noncommercial webcasters for the digital performance of sound recordings under section 114 of title 17, United States Code, and the making of ephemeral phonorecords under section 112 of title 17, United States Code, during the period beginning on October 28, 1998, and ending on May 31, 2003, which have not already been paid, shall not be due until June 20, 2003.

Deadline.

(2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term “noncommercial webcaster” has the meaning given that term in section 114(f)(5)(E)(i) of title 17, United States Code, as added by section 4 of this Act.

(b) SMALL COMMERCIAL WEBCASTERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The receiving agent may, in a writing signed by an authorized representative thereof, delay the obligation of any 1 or more small commercial webcasters to make payments pursuant to sections 112 and 114 of title 17, United States Code, for a period determined by such entity to allow negotiations as permitted in section 4 of this Act, except that any such period shall end no later than December 15, 2002. The duration and terms of any such delay shall be as set forth in such writing.

Expiration date.

(2) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection—

(A) the term “webcaster” has the meaning given that term in section 114(f)(5)(E)(iii) of title 17, United States Code, as added by section 4 of this Act; and

(B) the term “receiving agent” shall have the meaning given that term in section 261.2 of title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, as published in the Federal Register on July 8, 2002.

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION FOR SETTLEMENTS.

Section 114(f) of title 17, United States Code, is amended by adding after paragraph (4) the following:

“(5)(A) Notwithstanding section 112(e) and the other provisions of this subsection, the receiving agent may enter into agreements for the reproduction and performance of sound recordings under section 112(e) and this section by any 1 or more small commercial webcasters or noncommercial webcasters during the period beginning on October 28, 1998,

and ending on December 31, 2004, that, once published in the Federal Register pursuant to subparagraph (B), shall be binding on all copyright owners of sound recordings and other persons entitled to payment under this section, in lieu of any determination by a copyright arbitration royalty panel or decision by the Librarian of Congress. Any such agreement for small commercial webcasters shall include provisions for payment of royalties on the basis of a percentage of revenue or expenses, or both, and include a minimum fee. Any such agreement may include other terms and conditions, including requirements by which copyright owners may receive notice of the use of their sound recordings and under which records of such use shall be kept and made available by small commercial webcasters or noncommercial webcasters. The receiving agent shall be under no obligation to negotiate any such agreement. The receiving agent shall have no obligation to any copyright owner of sound recordings or any other person entitled to payment under this section in negotiating any such agreement, and no liability to any copyright owner of sound recordings or any other person entitled to payment under this section for having entered into such agreement.

Federal Register,
publication.

“(B) The Copyright Office shall cause to be published in the Federal Register any agreement entered into pursuant to subparagraph (A). Such publication shall include a statement containing the substance of subparagraph (C). Such agreements shall not be included in the Code of Federal Regulations. Thereafter, the terms of such agreement shall be available, as an option, to any small commercial webcaster or noncommercial webcaster meeting the eligibility conditions of such agreement.

“(C) Neither subparagraph (A) nor any provisions of any agreement entered into pursuant to subparagraph (A), including any rate structure, fees, terms, conditions, or notice and recordkeeping requirements set forth therein, shall be admissible as evidence or otherwise taken into account in any administrative, judicial, or other government proceeding involving the setting or adjustment of the royalties payable for the public performance or reproduction in ephemeral phonorecords or copies of sound recordings, the determination of terms or conditions related thereto, or the establishment of notice or recordkeeping requirements by the Librarian of Congress under paragraph (4) or section 112(e)(4). It is the intent of Congress that any royalty rates, rate structure, definitions, terms, conditions, or notice and recordkeeping requirements, included in such agreements shall be considered as a compromise motivated by the unique business, economic and political circumstances of small webcasters, copyright owners, and performers rather than as matters that would have been negotiated in the marketplace between a willing buyer and a willing seller, or otherwise meet the objectives set forth in section 801(b).

“(D) Nothing in the Small Webcaster Settlement Act of 2002 or any agreement entered into pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall be taken into account by the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in its review of the determination by the Librarian of Congress of July 8, 2002, of rates and terms for the digital performance of

sound recordings and ephemeral recordings, pursuant to sections 112 and 114.

“(E) As used in this paragraph—

“(i) the term ‘noncommercial webcaster’ means a webcaster that—

“(I) is exempt from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 501);

“(II) has applied in good faith to the Internal Revenue Service for exemption from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code and has a commercially reasonable expectation that such exemption shall be granted; or

“(III) is operated by a State or possession or any governmental entity or subordinate thereof, or by the United States or District of Columbia, for exclusively public purposes;

“(ii) the term ‘receiving agent’ shall have the meaning given that term in section 261.2 of title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, as published in the Federal Register on July 8, 2002; and

“(iii) the term ‘webcaster’ means a person or entity that has obtained a compulsory license under section 112 or 114 and the implementing regulations therefor to make eligible nonsubscription transmissions and ephemeral recordings.

“(F) The authority to make settlements pursuant to subparagraph (A) shall expire December 15, 2002, except with respect to noncommercial webcasters for whom the authority shall expire May 31, 2003.”.

Expiration date.

SEC. 5. DEDUCTIBILITY OF COSTS AND EXPENSES OF AGENTS AND DIRECT PAYMENT TO ARTISTS OF ROYALTIES FOR DIGITAL PERFORMANCES OF SOUND RECORDINGS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) in the case of royalty payments from the licensing of digital transmissions of sound recordings under subsection (f) of section 114 of title 17, United States Code, the parties have voluntarily negotiated arrangements under which payments shall be made directly to featured recording artists and the administrators of the accounts provided in subsection (g)(2) of that section;

(2) such voluntarily negotiated payment arrangements have been codified in regulations issued by the Librarian of Congress, currently found in section 261.4 of title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, as published in the Federal Register on July 8, 2002;

(3) other regulations issued by the Librarian of Congress were inconsistent with the voluntarily negotiated arrangements by such parties concerning the deductibility of certain costs incurred for licensing and arbitration, and Congress is therefore restoring those terms as originally negotiated among the parties; and

(4) in light of the special circumstances described in this subsection, the uncertainty created by the regulations issued by the Librarian of Congress, and the fact that all of the interested parties have reached agreement, the voluntarily

17 USC 114 note.

negotiated arrangements agreed to among the parties are being codified.

(b) DEDUCTIBILITY.—Section 114(g) of title 17, United States Code, is amended by adding after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) A nonprofit agent designated to distribute receipts from the licensing of transmissions in accordance with subsection (f) may deduct from any of its receipts, prior to the distribution of such receipts to any person or entity entitled thereto other than copyright owners and performers who have elected to receive royalties from another designated agent and have notified such nonprofit agent in writing of such election, the reasonable costs of such agent incurred after November 1, 1995, in—

“(A) the administration of the collection, distribution, and calculation of the royalties;

“(B) the settlement of disputes relating to the collection and calculation of the royalties; and

“(C) the licensing and enforcement of rights with respect to the making of ephemeral recordings and performances subject to licensing under section 112 and this section, including those incurred in participating in negotiations or arbitration proceedings under section 112 and this section, except that all costs incurred relating to the section 112 ephemeral recordings right may only be deducted from the royalties received pursuant to section 112.

“(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (3), any designated agent designated to distribute receipts from the licensing of transmissions in accordance with subsection (f) may deduct from any of its receipts, prior to the distribution of such receipts, the reasonable costs identified in paragraph (3) of such agent incurred after November 1, 1995, with respect to such copyright owners and performers who have entered with such agent a contractual relationship that specifies that such costs may be deducted from such royalty receipts.”.

(c) DIRECT PAYMENT TO ARTISTS.—Section 114(g)(2) of title 17, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(2) An agent designated to distribute receipts from the licensing of transmissions in accordance with subsection (f) shall distribute such receipts as follows:

“(A) 50 percent of the receipts shall be paid to the copyright owner of the exclusive right under section 106(6) of this title to publicly perform a sound recording by means of a digital audio transmission.

“(B) 2½ percent of the receipts shall be deposited in an escrow account managed by an independent administrator jointly appointed by copyright owners of sound recordings and the American Federation of Musicians (or any successor entity) to be distributed to nonfeatured musicians (whether or not members of the American Federation of Musicians) who have performed on sound recordings.

“(C) 2½ percent of the receipts shall be deposited in an escrow account managed by an independent administrator jointly appointed by copyright owners of sound recordings and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (or any successor entity) to be distributed to nonfeatured vocalists (whether or not members of the

American Federation of Television and Radio Artists) who have performed on sound recordings.

“(D) 45 percent of the receipts shall be paid, on a per sound recording basis, to the recording artist or artists featured on such sound recording (or the persons conveying rights in the artists’ performance in the sound recordings).”.

SEC. 6. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

By not later than June 1, 2004, the Comptroller General of the United States, in consultation with the Register of Copyrights, shall conduct and submit to the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate a study concerning the economic arrangements among small commercial webcasters covered by agreements entered into pursuant to section 114(f)(5)(A) of title 17, United States Code, as added by section 4 of this Act, and third parties, and the effect of those arrangements on royalty fees payable on a percentage of revenue or expense basis.

Deadline.
17 USC 114 note.

Approved December 4, 2002.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 5469:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 148 (2002):

Oct. 7, considered and passed House.

Nov. 14, considered and passed Senate, amended. House concurred in Senate amendment.