

Secretary Senate Select Committee on the FTA between Australia and the USA
Suite S1.30.1
The Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Email: FTA@aph.gov.au

30th April, 2004

Dear Committee Members,

I write to you with concern that we, in Australia, are considering the adoption of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the USA.

The parts, which are especially dangerous, are in Section 17, which relate to intellectual property, specifically copyright and patent law.

As the publisher of both Your Sydney Home and the Sydney Observer magazine, intellectual property is extremely important.

Copyrights exist, usually, to allow a measure of protection for the copyright holder. The planned changes have the effect of making certain software **illegal**.

In our industry any competitive advantage we are able to obtain is useful. For us one of our competitive advantages is the use of Free Software, such as Linux and Samba.

Both pieces of software relying upon reverse engineering and circumventing the technological restrictions of large software manufacturer. In particular one such manufacturer, Microsoft, has been convicted in the US as a monopolist.

The net effect would mean that the adoption of this FTA would be to make Free Software illegal. It requires us, as a business, to invest in software not created in Australia. That would mean a greater expenditure on Software rather than on people. So, ultimately, adoption of this FTA will lead to a loss of jobs.

As one of the many small business owners, who form the large bulk of employers in this country, I urge the Committee to reject this Free Trade Agreement. The FTA does nothing to enhance the interests of Australia and serve only the interests of corporate USA.

Yours Sincerely,

Geeta Kumria
Publisher