



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF THEATRE OWNERS  
750 First Street, N.E., Suite 1130  
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*For Release Upon House Passage of S.167*

## **Motion Picture Theatre Industry Applauds Congressional Action to Prevent Movie Theft**

### ***National Association of Theatre Owners Urges President Bush to Sign Legislation***

Washington, D.C. (April 19, 2005) – The National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO), representing operators of motion picture theatres, applauds action taken today by the U.S. House of Representatives to outlaw movie theft. The House today passed S. 167, the Family Entertainment and Copyright Act of 2005. Among other provisions, the legislation would impose criminal penalties for the unauthorized recording of motion pictures, or “camcording,” in a movie theatre.

“Movie theft constitutes an ever graver threat to the entire motion picture industry, including the cinemas operated by our members,” stated Kendrick Macdowell, NATO’s General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs. “This legislation will permit theatre operators to combat movie theft at its main source, by intercepting and detaining thieves who brazenly attempt to copy movies from our screens.”

Critical to theatre owners’ support for the legislation is the immunity provision – similar to a shopkeepers’ immunity – that protects theatre owners and their employees who detain camcorder thieves in good faith. “Theatre employees are the Marines against movie theft, and they deserve protection from frivolous and expensive lawsuits when they act in good faith,” said Macdowell.

With House passage today, S. 167 will now be presented to the President for his approval. “We want to thank the congressional leaders and their staff who championed the legislation over the past several years, particularly Senators Hatch, Leahy, Cornyn and Feinstein, and Representatives Sensenbrenner, Lamar Smith, Conyers and Berman,” concluded Macdowell.

The National Association of Theatre Owners is the largest exhibition trade organization in the world, representing movie theatres in all 50 states and in more than 40 countries. NATO represents all of the ten largest movie theatre operators in the country, as well as over 500 smaller exhibition companies, for a combined total of more than 29,000 U.S. movie screens. NATO is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with a second office in North Hollywood, California. The association has a website at [www.natoonline.org](http://www.natoonline.org).

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