



April 21st, 2023

The Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba (FHRC) is submitting this statement for the record concerning the hearing titled [Insert Title] before the House Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee on [Insert Subcommittee] on April 27th, 2023.

FHRC is an independent and non-partisan institution that advocates for a peaceful transition to a free and democratic Cuba. We believe that secure property rights are fundamental to the freedoms enjoyed by Americans in this country and to the restoration of freedom and democracy in Cuba.

Since 1959, the regime in Havana has aimed to control the Cuban population by eliminating private property rights. The regime has summarily confiscated the private property of both Cubans and foreigners without compensation from the earliest days of the Cuban Revolution. Even today, the current dictatorship in Havana continues to disregard and violate private property rights and trample upon the rule of law for its own benefit.

That is why FHRC strongly supports H.R. 1505, the No Stolen Trademarks Honored in America Act. This act seeks to end the Cuban regime's profiting from the theft of intellectual property rights for many years.

Section 211 of the Omnibus Appropriations bill in 1998, which prohibits U.S. courts from recognizing trademarks associated with businesses that the Cuban regime illegally confiscated, is a welcome step in protecting the rights of American businesses and individuals while holding the Cuban regime accountable for its willful violation of fundamental freedoms and the rule of law.

However, this law was found to be non-compliant with the World Trade Organization. Therefore, H.R. 1505 is necessary to update Section 211 and ensure that stolen trademarks are not honored in America while being compliant with the WTO.

This technical change would protect American businesses and individuals' intellectual property rights and send a strong message to the Cuban regime that the United States does not tolerate the theft of intellectual property, no matter who is involved or where.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jose "Tony" Costa
Foundation for Human Rights in Cuba