



**Testimony of**  
**Emily Shackelton**  
**Songwriter**  
**Board Member, Nashville Songwriters Association International**

**on**

***Music Industry Roundtable***

**before the**

**Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, and the Internet**  
**United State House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary**

**June 21, 2023**

Thank you, Chairman Issa and ranking member Johnson.

My name is Emily Shackelton, and I am proud to sit on the Board of Directors of the Nashville Songwriters Assn. International, or NSAI, along with 26 more world-class songwriters who guide the organization.

With 100 global chapters, NSAI was founded in 1967. Our first advocacy effort was to get songwriters' names on records. In recent years we've adopted the Songwriters Capital Gains Tax Equity Act, were instrumental in the creation and adoption of the Music Modernization Act and the Mechanical Licensing Collective, and were participants in several Copyright Royalty Board proceedings -- including Phonorecord III and IV -- which will produce billions in new mechanical royalties over the next five years. We also own and operate Nashville's iconic music venue, The Bluebird Cafe.

As a professional songwriter hailing from the Iron Range in Northern Minnesota, my income depends on getting an artist to not only record my song, but also make it a hit radio single. I do not share in their ticket, merchandise or brand revenues. Most of the writers who came before me made much of their income on album cuts, a source of royalty revenue that's almost meaningless in a world of streaming. I worry about the generation of writers who follow me. So, I am glad the IP Subcommittee is paying attention to the music industry and to American songwriters.

On my way to DC, a soldier asked about my guitar. I explained what I do, and admitted it felt pretty insignificant compared to her sacrifice. She smiled and told me country music is what got her through both her tours of duty overseas away from her babies. I am so grateful I get to write songs that have the power to resonate with people no matter what they're going through. And I'm grateful for your partnership. Please remember NSAI's motto as you navigate the evolving music landscape: "It All Begins With A Song."

Thank you.

## THE NASHVILLE SONGWRITERS ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

### ABOUT NSAI

The Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI) is the world's largest not-for-profit trade association for songwriters. NSAI was founded in 1967 by 42 songwriters including Eddie Miller, Marijohn Wilkin, Kris Kristofferson, Felice and Boudleaux Bryant and Liz and Casey Anderson as an advocacy organization for songwriters and composers. NSAI has around 5,000 members and nearly 100 chapters in the United States and abroad.

The Nashville Songwriters Association International is dedicated to protecting the rights of songwriters in all genres of music and addressing needs unique to the songwriting profession. The association, governed by a Board of Directors composed entirely of professional songwriters, features a number of programs and services designed to provide education and career opportunities for songwriters at every level.

NSAI owns The Bluebird Cafe, a legendary songwriter performance venue in Nashville, Tennessee. The Music Mill, at 1710 Roy Acuff Place in Nashville, where the careers of Alabama, Reba McEntire, Toby Keith, Shania Twain and Billy Ray Cyrus were launched, serves as headquarters for the Nashville Songwriters Association International.