

STATEMENT OF
LAINIEY WILSON
BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON COURTS, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND THE INTERNET
ON
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY: PART II— IDENTITY IN THE AGE OF AI
FEBRUARY 2, 2024
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Chairman Issa, Ranking Member Johnson, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me here today to share my thoughts.

I am Lainey Wilson. I am a recording artist, songwriter, and entertainer. I use my music and my voice to tell stories, to connect to my fans, and to help them connect to each other. My art is uniquely, and literally – me: my name, my likeness, my voice.

I don't have to tell you how much of a gut punch it is to have your name, likeness, or voice ripped from you and used in ways you could never imagine and would never allow. It's wrong. Plain and simple. There aren't many things we can control in life, but making decisions about the use of our own selves, our own unique qualities – that should be one.

I'm excited about lots of ways artificial intelligence can be used to help people. But I'm nervous about how it can be used to take personal rights. And I'm honored today to represent the Human Artistry Campaign -- a coalition of creators and organizations that promote the ethical use of AI, and who understand that human connection is an essential part of our culture that we just can't put at risk.

Many creators have already seen their life's work and their own voices and images thoughtlessly ingested into AI models without their permission. Our identities represent years of work to hone our craft and make a livelihood out of our passion. Our voices and likenesses are indelible parts of us that have enabled us to showcase our talents and grow our audiences - not mere digital kibble for a machine to duplicate without consent. AI tools are purposely being made to take a lifetime of specific artists' voices and likenesses in a fraction of a second.

Some creators are ok with AI platforms using their voices and likenesses. Some are not. The important thing is that it should be their choice, and not a choice that an AI cloning company gets to make for them. AI-generated music and video using an artists' unique identity to perform in questionable settings or to sing lyrics they would never write or express, that doesn't reflect who they really are, is unacceptable. It is a personal violation that threatens a person's dignity and can put at risk everything they have worked so hard to accomplish.

An artists' voice and likeness are their property and shouldn't take a backseat to the economic interests of companies that have not invested in or partnered with the artist.

I join with many other creators in the Human Artistry Campaign in support of the No AI FRAUD Act and want to express my deep appreciation to its sponsors. I have heard that some interests have criticized it as preventing freedom of expression that uses the voices and images of other people. I'm a big proponent of free speech and I'm certainly no lawyer, but I do know that if you take away the ability of artists to express themselves, you are by definition limiting freedom of expression.

It's not just artists who need protecting – fans need it too. It's needed for high school girls who have experienced life-altering deep fake porn using their faces; for elderly citizens convinced to hand over their life savings by a vocal clone of their grandchild in trouble. AI increasingly affects every one of us, and I'm grateful that you are considering taking action to ensure that these tools are used in responsible ways.

I want to thank you all for your role as guardians of our personal rights. We need artists to keep telling stories, connecting with fans, and bringing people together – authentically. We need to keep humanity in art. We just can't lose that. The No AI FRAUD Act is a great place to start. Thank you.