

U.S. seeks WTO crackdown on China piracy

American tech business groups are hoping the World Trade Organization will prompt a crackdown on intellectual-property piracy in China.

The United States Wednesday asked the WTO to demand proof from Beijing that it is taking active steps to snuff out the illegal copying of foreign-made software, movies and other such products.

"China has enacted a number of laws to protect intellectual property, including a law to protect semiconductor layout designs," Semiconductor Industry Association President George Scalise said in a news release. "Enforcement of IP protection laws has been widely recognized as falling short of what is needed to deter violations."

The Los Angeles Times said the losses to American, Japanese and European companies attributed to piracy in China totaled about \$60 billion in 2003 alone.

China is expected to respond to the WTO request in about three months. If the response is deemed to be lacking, the organization could eventually seek economic sanctions.

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