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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

22 March 2005

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Statement of U.S. PIRG Consumer Program Director Ed Mierzwinski at CFA News Conference on Peer-to Peer Networks

We are pleased to join Mark Cooper of the Consumer Federation of America, along with representatives of Free Press and Consumers Union, to release a report documenting that while piracy may be a problem for the recording industry, peer-to-peer networking is not.

Worse, the industry's purported solutions to its supposed piracy problems — freezing Internet innovation by making peer-to-peer illegal and tightening the copyright noose even further — will choke democratic communication, snuff the candles lighting new cultural ideas and unjustly limit the fair-use rights of ordinary Americans.

Big industry and ordinary citizens alike deserve public policies that embrace change. Innovation is the engine of social, cultural and economic growth. Throughout history, new technologies, ranging from the printing press to peer-to-peer networks, are proven to bring tremendous social gains, even as old technologies and old economic models become outmoded and are replaced.

The state PIRGs are pleased to join CFA, Consumers Union and Free Press in a new campaign to preserve choices for consumers, ensure competition and innovation in communications and protect the rights of artists and musicians to promote new cultural ideas in the digital world.

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U.S. PIRG serves as the national advocacy office for state Public Interest Research Groups. The state PIRGs are non-profit, non-partisan public interest advocacy organizations with offices around the country. State PIRG Consumer Protection page

<http://www.pirg.org/consumer>