



**SOCIETY OF  
American  
Archivists**

---

**Statement to WIPO Standing Committee on Copyright and  
Related Rights  
SCCR 37**

**Archival Issues Involved in Proposal for an Exclusive  
Right for Broadcasting**

**William J. Maher (w-maher@illinois.edu)**

**November 26, 2018**

On behalf of the Society of American Archivists, North America's largest organization of archivists, we want to commend you for your continued chairmanship of SCCR, and thank the Secretariat for its preparation of the Committee's work.

For 8 decades, archives have included not just paper records but also important sound and video recordings, many of which have come from broadcasters. These invaluable documents connect society with its past. Try to think of a major event of the past 50 years-the fall of the Berlin Wall or the September 11 collapse of the Twin Towers without the video images that came first from broadcasts. These documents are what gives substance and impact to history and society.

Thus, regardless of whatever measures are put into place to provide the signal protection that broadcasters need, it is essential that they do not add any further layers on the copyright protection that already exists in the content or extend that protection for terms beyond the current business needs of broadcasters.

Archivists are responsible for heritage over a long passage of time, but the fortunes of all institutions and businesses are ephemeral, and they disappear with regularity. Thus, adding a new right that effectively extends to the content of broadcast signals would add immeasurably to the orphan works problem for archives in preserving and providing access to these documents that are such important parts of society's historical record.