

## *Open Letter to the Congressional Black Caucus & Congressional Hispanic Caucus*

Dear Caucus Member:

As diverse and independent publishers of fiction, poetry and prose whose shared mission is to provide an outlet for the creative voices of communities under-represented in the mainstream commercial culture, we are writing to express our collective concerns over the impact that the proposed Google Book Settlement ("GBS") will have on us and the writers we represent. Our hope is that this letter will encourage you, and the Congressional Black and Hispanic Caucuses as a whole, to speak out about the importance of protecting our interests as this process moves forward in the weeks and months ahead. Without your vocal support, our diverse and independent voices will remain absent from this important dialogue.

All of us share the belief that technology has the potential to open new avenues that will empower our industry to reach broader audiences, exposing more and more people to the creative genius of those we represent. At the same time, we do not believe that technology and the amazing promises it holds can or should be used as an excuse for abandoning important and long-standing principles we value, namely protecting intellectual property and an open, competitive marketplace for books and other creative literature. Sadly, in our view, the proposed GBS, even as amended, threatens to undermine both of these core values.

Our concerns about the proposed GBS are not limited to its substance; we also believe the process has been deeply flawed from the start. What began as a lawsuit has turned into a far-reaching, secretive attempt by a few self-interested parties to define and control the future marketplace for all digital books, without the input or involvement of other important and relevant stakeholders, including diverse and independent publishers like us.

Until and unless the process is opened up and the creative voices we represent and serve are allowed a seat at the table and a stake in the process—along with others who have been shut out thus far—we believe the proposed settlement will fall short of creating the kind of future digital marketplace that serves the true interests of consumers and creators.

Respectfully submitted,

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