

France approves controversial iTunes bill

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The lower house of the French Parliament approved Tuesday the controversial digital copyright bill in a vote of 296-193.

The bill, which now moves onto the Senate, would require companies like Apple to provide interoperability technology so that consumers can convert digital content into any playable formats.

Currently, Apple allows only for iTunes downloads to exclusively be uploaded and played by Apple iPod products.

It could affect other businesses in the same arena as Apple including VirginMega.fr, OD2 France, e-compil.fr, fnac.com and Sony Connect.

It also provides penalties, fining people who make files available for download illegally up to 150 euros and those illegally downloading music 38 euros, while fining creators or distributors of illegal downloading software 300,000 euros and up to three years in prison.

While France has said this move would promote legal downloading, critics are claiming otherwise, fearing digital rights management and copyrights could be compromised.

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