

French lawmakers reconsider Internet piracy bill

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(AP) -- French legislators reconsidered a bill Wednesday that would punish people who illegally download music and films by cutting off their Internet connections.

The bill was rejected in a surprise move earlier this month. Record labels and film companies had looked to the measure to boost ever-shrinking profits in the face of online file-sharing, which lets people swap [music files](#) without paying.

But they couldn't rally the needed support for the vote earlier this month, and it was rejected in a near-empty lower house of parliament.

The government submitted it again Wednesday, prompting a heated debate. Socialist lawmakers who oppose the measure shouted down Culture Minister Christine Albanel.

A new vote is expected Tuesday.

The measure would create a government agency to track and punish those who pirate [music](#) and film on the Internet. Users would receive e-mail warnings for their first two identified offenses, a certified letter for the next, and would have their Web connection severed, for as long as one year, for any subsequent illegal downloads.

Legislators and activists who opposed the bill say it would intrude on civil liberties and be impossible to apply.

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