

Dear Sir

Laws primarily work by consent, common sense and persuasion. Mandelson's attempts to shock and scare internet users into obeying copyright laws will backfire, and meanwhile undermine rights we all hold dear, including the right to be presumed innocent ('Digital economy bill: A punishing future', Leader, 23 Nov).

My European parliamentary colleagues recently stood up for these rights in the new Telecoms package. We firmly believe that Mandelson's proposals do not fit with the new laws' statement that "measures may only be taken with due respect for the principle of presumption of innocence and the right to privacy. A prior fair and impartial procedure shall be guaranteed, including the right to be heard of the person of persons concerned".

Lacklustre "appeals" mechanisms and punishments based on uncertain evidence do not in our view fit with this article. We therefore welcome the Guardian's justified outrage, and that of the 11,000 individuals that have signed the petition against these proposals on Downing Street's website.

Caroline Lucas MEP

Leader, Green Party