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Note to reporters and editors:

Attorney Ron Lazebnik, a professor at the Fordham University Law School, New York City, today will present oral argument on behalf of the National Writers Union, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America and the American Society of Journalists and Authors, Inc.

National Writers Union Asks Federal Court To Scrap Proposed Google Book Deal

The National Writers Union today asked the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York to reject the amended settlement agreement of the lawsuit by the Author's Guild and the Association of American Publishers against Google Inc.

"The proposed settlement is fundamentally flawed, is unfair to writers and violates copyright law," said Larry Goldbetter, president of the National Writers Union. "The settlement would allow Google to use copyright-protected work unless authors 'opt out' of the agreement even though established copyright law protects an author's work without requiring the writer to negotiate with or notify Google.

"The NWU also contends that the Authors Guild represents only a small fraction of the writers in America and the Court should recognize that thousands of authors and numerous writers' organizations have said that the Guild doesn't and can't adequately represent their interests," he said.

Goldbetter said that NWU member and renowned science fiction writer Ursula Le Guin presented a petition urging the Court to reject the proposed settlement. In the petition, signed by 367 authors, Le Guin wrote, "We cannot have free and open dissemination of information and literature unless the use of written material continues to be controlled by those who write it or own legitimate right to it. We urge our government and our courts to allow no corporation to circumvent copyright law or dictate the terms of that control."

The National Writers Union is the nation's only labor union and advocacy organization for freelance writers in all genres, media, and formats. In addition to print media writers, NWU represents electronic writers and editors of blogs, e-newsletters and web sites. NWU is affiliated with the United Auto Workers (UAW) and the AFL-CIO.

NWU's legal briefs, statements, and additional information are available on the NWU Book Division website at www.nwubook.org.