Dear U.S. Copyright Office,

I am an artist, owner of a commercial art studio. I am very concerned about the potential changes being considered to the U.S. Copyright law. I create photographic works, original drawings, paintings and digital artworks. These works are the fruit of my labor, my assets, the exclusive rights to which are guaranteed to me as their creator by Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. To violate the exclusive rights to my work is to steal or allow to be stolen, my personal property. To require registration of each work would be onerous, costly, and contribute to the ease of infringement by others, including the private registration entities being considered. I have nearly 90,000 visual works that would be subject to registration requirements under a new copyright law. It would be an unreasonable burden to have to register each of these in order to secure rights that the constitution guarantees me upon their creation. My work continues to have value as it serves as business inventory from which I draw for sales. I should have the right to determine who uses my work and how and should be able to negotiate just compensation for its use.

I am also the Vice President of the American Society of Botanical Artists. With over 1300 members in the U.S. and 23 other countries, virtually all of whom are active artists creating drawings, paintings, and engravings of botanical subjects. Each of these individual artists deserve the same protection of their life's work to determine who may use it, how, and to receive compensation for its use by others without the burden or intrusiveness of registering every work.

It is imperative that the exclusive rights to visual works be bestowed upon the creator based solely on the works creation, that registration not be required to secure or maintain those rights and that those other than the creator may not infringe upon those rights without entering into an agreement with the creator to exchange some or all of those rights for as set by and agreed explicitly with the creator.

Sincerely,

Jody Williams