To whom it may concern:

I am a freelance illustrator. I am struggling to make a name for myself in illustration, and while I am getting to be known in local artist's circles, I am not making much profit from my own work yet. However, I stand to lose what I could make if the currently proposed laws go through.

I am very disturbed by the orphan works act and what this could mean for artists. As it stands right now, I do not make any royalties. Now, with new laws being proposed, not only will I continue to NOT receive royalties, but I will have to PAY to keep ownership of my work or some unscrupulous party may claim MY art as their own and profit from it! I will now have to take MY own money to protect something that I CANNOT make royalties on, meanwhile, other folks could take my creations and sell them as stock images without any profits going to me! Other countries pay artists royalties for reproductions, and indeed, even here in the US, other industries (such as the music industry) receive blanket royalties for their works. Now, I will have to pay money and register works AND not receive royalties! I will have to go back through my entire catalogue of works, works that currently receive free protection, to keep people from essentially taking credit for my work. That's like charging a home owner for the right to own a door lock! Especially since I am already protected NOW. All of this is being changed so that "culturally significant" works can be made public? The entire artistic output of the United States should NOT be made a smorgasbord for the sake of theses orphaned works! I'll have to pay fees on EVERYTHING or else risk being pirated. It's an unfair burden, especially for someone struggling to make a name for myself. I make little to no money from my art now, but someone with more marketing clout could hijack my work, make a profit, and I lose all rights on the work.

This cannot be allowed. I am making little artistic profit now, and I stand to lose even more if this law is passed. It's going to stifle artistic creativity, as every artist is going to have to register every photo of every sketch before safely sharing it to their fans (many of whom are fellow artists looking to be inspired). And, under new laws, I'm going to have to spend money to register works that are currently protected by the current laws for free. I'll have to keep all art hidden away and show no one until I have the funds to protect a choice few works!

This new law is supposed to preserve artistic works for the culture. Instead, it's going to kill creativity when all artists shrink away from exposure that could have their best work pirated away forever by a law that protects those that speak first, rather than those that create first. I urge everyone involved with this decision to avoid forced registration of artistic works.

Sincerely,

Jason Enos