I am writing to express my concerns with the new copyright legislation currently under discussion. The onus cannot be placed on the individual content creator to secure specific legal rights for each and every creation. The language of the currently drafted legislation could be interpreted such that a family's vacation photos posted to social media, or even on a personal web page, could be subsequently used for commercial purposes without their knowledge or consent, simply because they didn't think of it as a monetized commodity worth filing paperwork for. But this legislation would then immediately transfer the rights to these images out of their hands.

There are only two futures in a world where this legislation is allowed to go through unchanged. In one, I give up my rights to my own image or that of my family, or any small project I create, forfeiting not only my privacy but any potential unexpected benefits from a third party who might see my work in a forum for hobbyists or amateurs and only then consider it for publication. In the other, I maintain my privacy and control of my works, but I give up the ability to share them with others – even casually or on a web site of my own making - unless I am willing to pay the fees and file the paperwork associated with maintaining my ownership.

This legislation is a reversal of all precedent in the matter of copyright. An individual should have absolute rights to their work and their image unless they have knowingly given or sold those rights, or sufficient time has passed since the creator's death so that the creation has passed to the public domain. This has been and must continue to be the default state of all creative works. Artists, even amateurs and hobbyists, deserve to be fairly compensated for their work if it is ever used in a commercial context, and to remove that default legal protection is a slap in the face not only to everyone who creates art and music for a living now, but to anyone who dreams for future recognition in these fields.

I hope that the persons responsible for guiding future copyright law will make the correct decision and not proceed with redefining the relationship between an artist and their works.

Sincerely,

Ken Walter