To whom it may concern:

It is important that visually created works of art continue to be protected. “Everyone” is now a photographer for instance, in the age of social media. It is not acceptable that a picture I take for personal use and enjoyment may end up promoting a product without compensation for the fact I am now a “face” for said product.

It is also important that I am allowed to protect my “brand” of photographs. As I take pictures primarily of my children, nature, and pets I need to trust that somebody else cannot claim these pictures as their own or modify them without my consent.

As a photographer I should not be required to register every piece of my art. This causes a heavy burden on the artist and no burden on those who would use my art without my permission. If it is my picture, which I can prove with the original files and GPS metadata then I have a right to request an entity stop using my picture without proper credit and payment.

Without strong copyright I cannot protect myself or my products. I urge you to please dismiss this “orphan works” process in favor of something that places the burden on those who wish to potentially misuse works without properly paying the correct and original owner of the work.

Once a photograph is published it is no longer value-less. It is simply one object that has been sold for one specific use in one specific place. In most cases I retain full ownership of the product and could therefore license it again in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.

J. Helton