Karen Leonard
19015 Corliss Ave N
Shoreline, WA 98133

July 5, 2015

Re: Copyright Act 2015, pending

Dear Sirs;

I am an artist, and have been all my life. I have dedicated the last three years to being self-employed as a visual artist. I earn a living because people purchase art that I have created, or an authorized copy of that artwork, either directly from me, from a shop that represents me, or from websites such as FineArtAmerica.com and etsy.com. If it becomes legal for others to take my artwork and use it for themselves for their own financial gain without compensating me for my creativity, it will become impossible for me to earn a living. I am already an underdog because I cannot afford to mass produce and market my own artwork and must therefore depend on sales venues where I am one of many artists. At these venues, I am paying commissions of 30%-50% to the operator. That makes the profit margin very slim. I am already marginalized by the shrinking middle class (my customer base). Your new law would allow others to take my artwork, photocopy and distribute same without my permission or gain, and basically leave me with nothing---not even credit for being the artist. Or it will allow an admirer to pull one of my images off the internet and duplicate it for their own use. Once again, without compensating me.

In order to sell my own work directly to the public without paying a commission, I need a website and the internet. I must post images of my work so that the largest number of potential buyers can see it and hopefully purchase it. This is how people find me and see that my work is unique. If other entities are allowed to freely take my images and use them as they wish, I am left with nothing. Every artwork that I create is part of my inventory, and becomes what I rely upon to generate future sales/income.

I realize that tracking images on the internet is a logistical nightmare and it would be so much easier to just let the world have everything for free, no questions asked. But it will put an end to much creativity and beauty in the world. Without earnings from my artwork, I cannot afford to feed myself and continue producing art.

Sincerely,
Karen Leonard
KLeonardDesign.com