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To Whom it May Concern,

I am concerned about the proposed legislation regarding “Orphan Works”. I work as a freelance licensing artist and illustrator and have done for the past 20 years. This work has enabled me to help support my family, own our home, and pay my taxes. Licensing my art involves me granting manufacturers the rights to use my paintings on their products. I have some pieces of art that I have licensed continually for ten years or more, so you can see that they don’t lose their value after they have been published.

I am concerned about the idea of requiring registration of the art at a for profit registry. Registering with the copyright office should be all the protection that is needed. I have hundreds upon hundreds of pieces of art. Requiring me to send these all to a new registry would be financially onerous, and also huge expense of my time that could be better spent creating new art. It would take months for me to organize and submit all the many paintings I have. Also, to my knowledge, no central database yet exists. Who would be in charge of implementing these changes and designating which database artists are supposed to use? Why should an entity be able to profit financially on the back of a change in federal law? Would I have to belong to more than one? It the time that it takes for a central database to be created and for me to upload all my art, how many times could my art be taken and used without permission?

I already have frequent problems with unscrupulous companies violating my copyrights and using my art without permission. So far, dealing with these instances has been fairly simple, because my copyright ownership has been simple to prove. If the laws regarding copyright are relaxed, why would any company want to legitimately license or commission new work? They would be able to Google plenty of examples for free. This would put me and all my fellow licensing artists out of business.

I believe that the proposed changes would be ruinous to my career and wellbeing. My degree is in illustration. It is already hard enough to find enough work to keep my family solvent. Please don’t take away my best chance at providing for my family.

Thank you,
Jane Maday