I began college as a graphic design student. I made it into my school's graphic design program before deciding that illustration was more my style. I've since moved on to computer science in the name of money. That pursuit of money caused me to put my art on hold for years. I've just recently gotten back into doodling and digital painting and was shocked to read about the proposed copyright changes. Is the proposed changes take effect, I very well may cease posting my art for fear of losing legal claim to them. I don't want to see someone else benefitting from my hard work!

The internet makes being an artist a fantastic and a scary thing. It's wonderful to be able to receive quick (and often overwhelming) feedback on art you've spent, hours, days, or weeks creating, but there's always the issue of people improperly using what you've worked so hard on. As a freelance/hobbyist illustrator, I enjoy posting my art online, but I constantly fear having to track down someone who's improperly using my work. I am comforted by current copyright laws since I know that I hold legal claim to my work without having to specifically register each sketch I post.

Money is by far the most significant registration challenge for all visual artists. "Starving artist" isn't just a proud title, it's also a truth. If law makes it harder for artists to make art and support themselves doing it, we're going to see far less art which will mean less "magic" and imagination. I don't want to see America in that sad state.

I don't think it's overly difficult as laws stand now for people who would like to legally use visual media that was created by others. All they really need to do is contact the artist. If they do so kindly, I've seen artists license their work for free use more often than now.

Respectfully,
Jesse Millar