July 4, 2015

T0 whom it may concern –

My business is my art and art is my business. I understand you are considering changes to the copyright laws that would make my art available to the public for free. This obviously is not good news to me. When I make art, it is for me to sell and control the way that it is used. I wish to retain these property rights.

I am not a lawyer, but I cannot see how giving away an artist's work would ever be considered a good idea. I work hard to make a living as an artist and the proposed change, as I understand it would make that virtually impossible.

I went to school and studied and since 2003, I have run a business based on my artwork. I am a painter and have been honored with several awards.

For me, copyright law is not an abstract legal issue, but the basis on which I run my business. My art is my product, and I need it to be protected by the copyright laws.

The proposed law will infringe on my work, and allow others to profit from my product with no compensation to me. How can that be legal?

As professional artists it is important to our business that we remain able to determine voluntarily how and by whom our work is used. An assumption that work loses its value upon publication is false. Many of my sales are for prints, cards, or calendars I make of my work.

All of my paintings are part of my business's inventory and still has significant value to me. In this digital era, it is important for artists to retain the ownership of their original work and have it protected by copyright laws.

Professional artists earn their income from the sales of their art, and I cannot believe that in America that it would be legal to give their property away without their consent.

Please help us continue to make a living selling our work.

Sincerely,

Kathleen A. Johnson

Artist and Business Owner of Two Crows Studio