July 19, 2015

Maria Pallante
Register of Copyrights
U.S. Copyright Office
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20559-6000

RE: Notice of Inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congress

Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works (80fr23054)

Dear Ms. Pallante,

I'm really not very good at writing letters, but this issue is so important I'm going to try it anyway. I'm an illustrator who largely shares my work online, and have many friends in the same situation. While it's not my main source of income, I do make money from my work and the proposed changes to copyright law would seriously damage an artist's ability to do that.

The idea of protecting the rights of the public to use art and photos they found online for whatever they want rather than protecting the artists who put hard work into creating those things is honestly absolutely offensive to artists of every kind. The idea that the average person has more of a right to an artwork than the person who actually created it is downright ludicrous.

As a graphic designer at a print shop, I have people asking me all the time to “just pick something from google” to put on their advertisements and collateral for their businesses because they often aren't willing to pay extra for stock photos to use, and it's so frustrating trying to tell them those pictures aren't just for anyone to do whatever they like with them. Just because all these images are so available for viewing on the internet, people seem to think it's okay to take the ones they like for their own purposes, but that is illegal, and should definitely stay that way.

Forcing artists to register every single thing they create just to keep people from using it for their own purposes whether it's just a sketch or a full illustration puts an unnecessary burden on the artists to protect their own work constantly, and it kind of sounds like people want to put this registration into the hands of private for profit groups, which suggests that they'll expect all artists to pay for every single piece they register. Artists are drawing all the time, and many of them like to share their work online. I can't even imagine how much it would cost to register so many pictures, or how long it would take to do so. Would an artist have to wait until it went through this registration process to even post it rather than being able to share it right away?

I can easily see this kind of law making artists afraid to share their artwork online, which will also make it harder for them to gain exposure and find paying work from the people who do find it and contact them. Society as a whole seems to not value artists as what they are: skilled people that should be compensated fairly for their abilities. The fact that nobody values art enough makes it so hard for artists to make a living from what they do, people think it's just a hobby or it's easy for us but we spend years of our lives practicing and refining our skills. It's hard enough to convince people to pay us a decent amount of money for the work we do for them, we can't afford to spend that much money just to make sure people don't steal from us, and that's really what it seems this system promotes, pure and simple art theft. And if it's easier to just steal existing art, people will be even less willing to contact an

artist and pay them for their hard work.

Taking the rights away from the artist allows anyone to take the images they created and put it on whatever they like, potentially to the point where they are selling and profiting from the hard work of others. There are already too many people who do things like take artwork they found online, slap it on a t-shirt, and pass it off as their own work. Please don't promote this kind of behavior by protecting the public's rights after artists and making it harder for us to stop this kind of fraud.

Please do not allow such a harmful law to pass. This would hurt artists everywhere, and further show that society considers us unimportant and the unique pieces we put so much effort into creating are basically disposable trash for anyone to pick up and use as they like. It is absolutely more important to protect the rights of artists over their own work, and I know I would feel this way even if I weren't one myself.

Sincerely,

Katrina McMillin

Keller, TX 76248