US Congress
US Capitol
East Capitol St NE & First St SE
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 226-8000

July 21,

Dear Congress.

I am respectfully writing to you in regards to the pending legislation regarding proposed changes to the Copyright Act.

I am a professional artist who has been working in the licensing field for about 11 years. Having worked on both sides of the licensing profession, initially, licensing images from photographers and illustrators, I negotiated rates, and discovered how challenging it is to get your art licensed, much less getting good rates for you work. Now, I am on the other side of that equation, licensing my art to manufacturers and am finding how little the percentages are, for works of art that I have poured hours of time and effort into. In order to make a viable living, I have to be extremely prolific.

In 1981, I earned my B.F.A. from Utah State University in illustration and advertising design. I have worked since in a variety of different, but related fields; Hallmark Cards; Advertising, Broadcast Television and am currently working in the product industry, creating artwork for home decor and social expression, gifts, etc. I have won numerous awards and have been very fortunate to be able to support myself in my chosen profession.

What I learned about the pending legal changes to our copyrights greatly concerns me. By passing the proposed Orphan Works and Mass Digitization legislation, you will thereby voiding my constitutional right to having exclusive control and ownership over my own work. It will force me to register each and ever piece I create, otherwise, my unregistered work would be categorized as "orphaned", and therefore become subject to predators in the guise of 'good faith" infringers that would directly impact my ability to make money off of my own art and labor. It is, quite frankly, allowing others to steal my work. By "privileging" others to use my work without compensation would provide no incentive for me to continue this line of work and would completely negate the last 20+ years of investment in my career. By pressuring me to register each and every piece I make, would be cost prohibitive and time consuming at best. At worst, it would feel like harassment.

To state that my work has no further value once it has been published is completely and utterly false. I have licensed the same collections to different manufacturers after the initial publication. Having been published only adds to that art's value. To allow others to make money without compensation will erode my ability to make a living. And IF my work is no longer valuable, why is it these other "interested parties" are so keen on having access to my work? Under this Orphan Works proposal , the same could be said that once a musician's recording has played on the radio, it no longer has any commercial value. That's completely insane! Please, remember, my artworks/copyrights, registered or not, are my businesses' assets.

I cannot stress enough that this proposed legislation has all the earmarks of a "money-grab" I have no idea who is behind the idea to lay claim to work that does not belong to them, but I will be shocked if you, our US Congress does not see through this egregious attempt to steal from our nation's artists and creators.

Therefore, I am emphatically asking that you categorically reject these proposals.

Thank you,

Susan Arnot
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