To whom it may concern,

There is already a tremendous amount of image piracy, companies that refuse to pay their artists, and sale of art that was taken from other online sources. I personally know several artists who have had their work sold without their permission online, at conventions, or other means. While I personally sell art on the side, the intellectual rights I have to my work are exceptionally important to me, and the thought that someone can use it for their own gain while I recieve nothing for real, very difficult work is unbelievable. For many this is a livlihood, and if you cannot just walk in and get free therapy, a new set of tires, or pro bono legal consultation because you feel like it, you should not be able to walk off with the sweat and blood of someone who works in a medium that's simply easy to steal.

Artists need greater protections, not less.

My greatest worry is that the passing of legislation stripping artists of their ability to profit from their own work, or indeed have any real control over it at all, will at the very least cause a huge decline in the amount of work available. Artists will either be starved out, switch professions, or change to means of artistic creation and sale that are no longer even slightly in the public domain. It would be a huge blow to the field, and our movies, games, graphic design, and indeed anything that relies on artists would take a serious hit.

Nothing good can come from this, save the short fiscal gain that lazy people would enjoy stealing art before it ceased being produced in any enjoyable quantity. The fact that small claims courts have been set up exclusively to deal with the expected tide of lawsuits hints that people expect this.

The highest achievement of a civilization is that it has progressed to the point where it's value is measured in expression for its own sake; this is a disturbing regression that I deeply hope doesn't come to pass.