STACY INNERST

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U.S. Copyright Office

101 Independence Ave. S.E.

Washington, D.C. 20559-6000

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you as an award-winning, professional illustrator of over 35 years whose work has appeared in many major publications both nationally and internationally. My work has ranged from creating editorial visual content for newspapers, magazines and digital media to picture book illustration and covers for publishing houses such as Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Harper Collins and Boyds Mills Press.

I am also a member of the Society of Illustrators in New York and am represented by Writers House Literary Agency.

I write this letter with great concern about a proposed law that would replace all existing copyright law and gravely effect the livelihood and legal protections of all professionals working in my field. The certain outcome of this legislation would be the cheapening and homogenization of creative works and the diminution of our national culture as a whole. Art has value, both commercially and intellectually, in any great culture and these “reforms” would serve to deaden both, diminishing the voices and livelihoods of creative minds.

This newly proposed copyright act would take out of my hands the ability to negotiate the value of my own labor and and place it in the control of corporate interests. Further, it would all but eliminate a significant revenue stream for myself and my family, that of re-licensing my work, which independent artists increasingly rely on in the digital marketplace.

The whole precept that once an artist’s work is published it has virtually no further commercial value and should therefore be available for use by the general public is, frankly, an uninformed and cynical way of thinking; one that should be rejected by any society that values its cultural vibrancy. Artists need to make a living for art to live.

For professional artists whose livelihoods depend on what we create and the agreements we make to determine how the art is used, this is much more than an abstract legal issue. The current proposed law would, in effect, waive the responsibility

of a potential user to find the copyright owner and redefine an orphaned work as any work by any artist that anyone finds ‘sufficiently’ hard to find. It’s a convenient setup to exempt the responsibility of the potential user from proper searching and void every rights holder’s exclusive right to his/her own property, a right stated in Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

Thank you for your careful consideration and I urge you to reject the Orphan Works Act .

Sincerely,

Stacy Innerst