I dont use tumblr as much as other social media. The people I follow on tumblr are usually right on their money, and dont promote anything untrue. They usually have a good grasp of copyright law, and if they dont know something they look it up or can direct others to someone that DOES know. After a few of their links, I came to the notice of inquiry.

This is an act that would limit artists further, and hand out many of the rights we struggle to protect already. The post I saw had lots of links to contact you, and to submit comments to your forum. I am going to do both.

As a freelance artist, making about $1200 a year from my work, in a town of about 60,000 people, I have been a victim of art theft. I am some nobody artist, and multiple people have taken my art from me, sold it for their own profit, used it without permission, used it in ways I did not approve of, and claimed as their own work. The only thing I could do to stop it was educate someone on copyright law, and when applicable, ask a website to take down a certain work that had been stolen from me. If I had wanted to, I also had the option to file a lawsuit against these people, but rationally, that would not have helped me, as a lawsuit would have cost much more money than I was losing with the stolen artwork.

Many artists in similar situations feel helpless, as I did, to stop the crude, and disgusting theft of our intellectual property. They feel like the only thing they CAN do is not enough.

The current copyright law DOES NEED TO CHANGE! It was set in place to protect the creators of artwork, not limit them. It was created and written to PREVENT art theft. With the digital age, and the distribution of online works, the current copyright law can NOT do that. It needs to be amended and reworked to BETTER PROTECT AUTHORS!

These wonderful things that I make should not belong to everyone to make money from. They should not be available to anyone but me, the creator, the author, to do with as I need. Artists have a hard enough time already getting "noticed" and exposure. There are people who spend decades in art school, learning a skill and working hard, spending thousands and thousands of dollars on school and supplies, only to WORK FOR FREE because of the potential, not even the promise, of exposure. That is wrong. These artists and authors need to be protected better.

I have clients that disregard current copyright law, and terms that I set forth in a contract to help protect myself, that sign said contract, and then sell work they do not legally own the rights to. And the only thing I can do to stop it from happening again is say "please stop," to which I will most likely be met with hostility.

We need something that is going to help us protect ourselves better, AND something that helps us take action against copyright infringement. This needs to happen INSTEAD of something that limits authors and hands away the hard work we do.

Creating a new act that gives the public so many rights to works that are currently protected will dramatically affect our culture in the USA. It is going to discourage people (even more, and its low right now) from making art, seeking art as a career, expressing themselves, creating at all. It will make people turn away from expression and creativity. It will make people give up their cultures and turn to becoming another farmer or electrician or accountant. We need farmers and

electricians and accountants, but the guy that files your taxes is contributing significantly less to CULTURE than the person designing movie posters that make you want to see the Avengers. Or the guy that builds websites for tourist companies. Or the guy designing the chair you are sitting in right now.

Culture IS art. Art is meaning making. Culture means there is a meaning to us all being put together. Culture is our food and our art and our writings. Culture is how we as a society make a difference and what we are remembered for. The definition of the word, culture, is "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively."

If you devastate the want for anyone to create, imagine what will happen to our culture.

Another thing that limiting authors, and giving more rights to non authors, will do is make it easier for companies, corporations, things that are NOT PEOPLE to make money from things that PEOPLE make. It is wrong to take money from the people making something, and hand it to companies that are making too much money and getting too many tax breaks and have so few restrictions already.

Please do not continue with this act. Please scrap the entire thing. It will destroy my life, and many others. We need a new copyright act, but the one that is under discussion right now is the furthest thing from what is needed.