RE: Notice of Inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congress
Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works (Docket # 2015-01)

To whom it may concern,
I am writing to state that simply put for an Artist like me Copyrights are my assets. PERIOD. Licensing my work is how I support my FAMILY and continue to be able to support my business. These new changes proposed by orphan works lobbyists will make a market that is already ripe with challenges virtually unsustainable for artists like myself.

First of all Illustrators like myself are constantly faced with "work for hire" contracts, which are already extremely abusive towards anyone in the creative fields. Many publishers will not hire an Artist who refuses to sign away their rights to their digital works. These rights are valuable to us and it is already demeaning that we aren't allowed to manage these rights ourselves. Existing Copyright laws have already opened up abusive practices by allowing work for hire laws and strips the creator of authorship and gives the false impression that the person who simply commissioned the job is the creator. We receive none of the benefits of "legal" employment but must swallow the ever-increasing cost of being an independent businessman. Education, workspace, insurance, tools, liabilities, retirement must all be out of MY pocket. These new laws will most certainly guarantee that creators are simply slave labor participants and under compensation will surely erode the creative industry allowing for those who are under trained and care little for the industries quality to become prevalent as nobody will be able to sustain a full career.

Second, it will open the floodgates for the already over bloated industry of gigantic Image Banks. I know of no business that requires more free work than that of the creative industry. Many young artists are faced with the idea that if they join these Image banks that their work will get noticed and their careers will soar. The problem is that you must register with them and there is of course a fee that is anywhere from 100-200 dollars PER image. Then handling, processing and maintenance fees further erode any royalties. Many require 60-90 percent of the royalty fees leaving the artist with a small fraction of his or her labor costs as their work is sold in bulk to a company that buys images in bulk and lowballs the costs.

These new changes MUST NOT be enacted as they will surely allow the further raping of young creators who simply want to be fairly compensated for their hard work and dedication.
Thank you for your time,
Wes Wheeler