July 20, 2015

Maria Pallante
Register of Copyrights
U.S. Copyright Office
101Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20559-6000

RE: Notice of Inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congress

Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works (Docket No. 2015-01)

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Dean Heezen. I am a nationally known artist and illustrator. Since 2008 I have been a professional artist producing freelance artistic material as my source of income. I have produced work for Disney, Dreamworks, Nickelodeon and other major animation corporations, as well as commissioned pieces to the public. I am also a member of the Animation Guild: IATSE Local 839, which has been representing and protecting animation artists since 1952. I am writing to address the problems visual artists face in the digital environment that will be caused by the new Orphan Works proposal.

As a freelance illustrator, I need to maintain revenue streams in order to earn money to pay for food, rent, my bills, taxes, and everyday living. My collection of work is a valuable resource that produces income for my future. With the animation industry being heavily involved with the digital medium, my online database of works holds a significant importance to professionally displaying my portfolio work to clients and patrons who are interested in doing business. Any attempt to replace our existing copyright laws with a system that would benefit internet companies would endanger my ability to protect my right of ownership to my works and thus,

have a job. In the past, certain companies have already begun digitizing my work without my permission or financial compensation. Why would the government favor corporations like this instead of those of us who actually create new work? It seems very backwards in the attempt to create new jobs, and to maintain the jobs that have already been created. This is why the very proposals the Copyright Office has made to Congress concern me.

A copyright law built on the foundation of orphan works law would allow internet companies to syphon off revenue from artists with the hopes of creating an even better revenue stream for themselves. There can be no bigger challenge for those of us who make our living creating new works than to have to compete with giant corporations that can get artwork free from artists and compete with us for our own markets. In addition, such a proposal to reintroduce registration would become another financial burden for artists. No matter how little registries might charge in the beginning, fees would grow as they gain a greater and greater competitive advantage over freelance artists, such as myself. Anyone who says this won't happen is not living in the real world. In the end, if the government succeeds in passing this legislation, the end result will be that artists, like myself, will find ourselves paying fees every time we create something maintain our images in somebody else's for profit registries. We, as professional artists, pay our taxes on the revenue we collect through our creative works, like any other hard working body. We should maintain the right of protection on the works we create without additional expenses on top of the dues we have already paid.

Thank you for reading my letter and I ask you to recommend that all forms of visual art (photography, drawings, paintings, graphic designs), be excluded from any orphan works provisions Congress writes into the new copyright act. Please help support the jobs and lives of the artist community.

Thanks,

Dean Heezen