July 23, 2015

Maria Pallante
Register of Copyrights
U.S. Copyright Office
101 Independence 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)

Dear Ms Pallante and the Copyright Staff:

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. My name is Elise N Black, and for the past 35 years I have been a freelance illustrator for the children's market. I have enjoyed a successful and busy career while raising 6 children, being a mother by day and doing most of my work while the children napped, were in school or after they were asleep at night. I have worked hard to create my own unique illustration style, and find great pleasure in the work I do.

I am writing to add my voice along with many artists across the country who are concerned about our future, and will try to address the questions asked:

1. What are the most significant challenges related to monetizing and/or licensing photographs, graphic artworks, and/or illustrations?

As a freelance illustrator, my work is a valuable resource that produces income for me and my family. The proposed changes to copyright laws would endanger my ability further to provide our livelihood. I have already seen much of my work reproduced without permission or compensation.

2. What are the most significant enforcement challenges for photographers, graphic artists, and/or illustrators?

In the digital world, it is almost impossible to maintain control of artist work.
The current proposals from the copyright office are simply a revision of the Orphan Works bill which was significantly opposed to and defeated once before, and would increase the ability of corporate greed to have my hard work for free.

3. What are the most significant registration challenges for photographers, graphic artists, and/or illustrators?

Registration for every piece of art I produce would be an unbelievable burden financially and every other way. I could not afford it, simple as that, nor would I have the time to do so, while maintaining the amount of work I would need produce to make ends meet. In the end, I would lose all the work I couldn't register, to anyone who wanted it at no cost whatsoever to them. I would ask anyone if they mind doing labor for free?

4. What are the most significant challenges or frustrations for those who wish to make legal use of photographs, graphic art works, and/or illustrations?

If someone wants to use another's work, it is easy to find the author, especially with the digital information available. I use photographs or graphic artwork as reference, and I can easily find the artist's name. The only problem I have seen is when someone takes the author's name off the work and passes it as their own. But then, there is no stopping such thievery.

5. What other issues or challenges should the Office be aware of regarding photographs, graphic artworks, and/or illustrations under the Copyright Act?

My fellow artists and I have seen too much of our livelihood diverted to the pockets of others, and fear that is just what will happen under the proposals made by the Copyright Office to Congress. I plead with you to recommend that visual art be excluded from any orphan works provisions that Congress writes into the new copyright act.

Sincerely,

Elise N Black