To Whom It May Concern:

Though I believe it concerns us all. I have been drawing and painting since I had relatively developed motor skills, and have been a professional artist for the past several years. I am a current student at the Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design, where I have received the 2013 William LeBarth Steele Memorial Scholarship Award as well as the 2015 Charlene Cosgrove Memorial Scholarship Award for Illustration. In light of this proposed copyright act, I look upon graduation with a great deal more fear than the mere state of the economy might otherwise provide.

It is of vital importance that artists and designers maintain control of their works, especially within digital formats. It is a fact that many visual artists rely on digital platforms to showcase our work, to garner interest in new projects, and to sell products. Weakening our sway over this process, or the longevity of our personal copyrights in any way will be extremely destructive to our livelihoods.

The proposed law trivializes the consent and intent of the creator, imperative factors to anyone working within this industry. Works created for specific purposes, or with specific messages could be warped and repurposed. We *must* maintain control of how our works are used. This is not only a matter of economic gain, but of morality and of just ownership. My work does not cease being mine simply because I post it on Tumblr, or print it in a book, or even when I lease it to a company for a period of time. Nor does its economic potential wane. Our current copyright laws protect this standard, to an extent, and while it is imperfect and apt for abuse, it is far better protection for those who desperately need it. And we *do* need that protection. Acting outside of this current standard is considered larceny, and legalizing such actions for the ease of corporations will not change the nature of theft.

It is unreasonable to presume that artists and designers will be able to register their works consistently. The view of the 'starving artist' is very much a reality to many of us. We don't generally hold very high incomes, and many of us have accepted that our careers will be a labor of love. Forcing us to take out individual copyrights for our works is ridiculous. It is also untrue to presume that artists are incapable of displaying their own work effectively over digital media, for economic gain. This is very much the future for many of us rising artists, and the sanctity of that platform should be maintained.
Sketches and small illustrations may not be seen as important enough to register by the artist. But this should not mean that they no longer own such designs or works, nor should it give permission to any other parties to use them freely.

Copyright law is a difficult business for many artists as it is. Many cannot defend themselves against corporations who have more money and power. This inequality, between artist and corporations, should not be widened further. Within the current system, and within my own field of illustration, contracts are drawn out on a case-

by-case basis, outlining what imagery may be used, by whom, and for how long. This power in the hands of the artist is essential to my career, and the infringement of this setup will be extremely harmful.

Many would agree that copyright law reform is needed. But this proposition is not a step in a right direction. I can only hope that the artistic community reaches out with enough force of voice to be heard.