Maria A. Pallante
Register of Copyrights and Director
U.S. Copyright Office

July 22, 2015

Dear Ms. Pallante,

I am writing to express my deep disagreement with the proposed legislation (Docket No. 2015–01) as it portends to negatively affect any livelihood I hope to have as an artist.

I have been a practicing visual artist for 25 years. I have a master's degree in Painting and Drawing from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and I have won awards from the Pollock-Krasner Foundation, the National Academy, and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. I live and work in Brooklyn, New York.

As is the case for any business hoping to succeed today, it has become essential for artists to advance their work and careers by publishing images of their works online. I am very concerned that the digital environment, in which all authorial information can easily be stripped from images, is rife with stolen images, some possibly mine, and that the proposed law will render my position as the creator of said images meaningless if my copyrights are no longer assumed.

My concerns about the proposed law include its presumed effect on licensed images. Like a majority of fine artists, I do not primarily make a living from the sales of my actual artworks. Thus I wish to earn some income from my work in the form of licensing my images. If I lose my current, passive protection of my copyright to my images, I do not have the monetary and labor resources to redress the situation, to pursue neither the registration requirements in the proposed law nor the legal paths to correct the injustice of infringement.

It appears that special interest groups like corporate entities have spearheaded the proposed legislation, and I am very concerned that the law, if passed, will encourage such large entities (as well as smaller ones) to infringe on my copyrights by using my images without my knowledge or consent—that the new law would allow them to do so with impunity. It's important to my livelihood as a very small business that I remain able to voluntarily determine how and by whom my work is used. Everything I create becomes part of my business inventory. My copyrights are the images I license. This means that infringing my copyright is like stealing my money.

I hope that the Copyright Office will come to realize that the proposed legislation is intended to serve only the interests of large and wealthy corporations and will harm the many small businesses of mostly penurious artists whose works are vital to the

functions of those corporations. If our creative works are so valuable to the public, why does the new law propose to punish the creators?

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views on this matter.

Sincerely,

Deanna Lee
Independent artist
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