To All Whom It May Concern,

My name is Elizabeth. I have been writing and drawing since I was old enough to hold a pen. In the last seven years alone, I have written over ten novels, three hundred short stories, drawn five webcomics, and thousands of pieces of art: sketches, digital pieces, illustrations, random musings that came pouring out of my head. I have self-published one novel, published several other pieces in magazines and a blog, and had the dedication to post weekly stories- for over two *years*- to my DeviantArt account.

Writing and drawing isn't just my hobby, but my life. As I crafted and shaped my art, it crafted and shaped me as well, turning me into who I am today. I have inspired others around me to follow suit, and pulled people into a frenzy of creativity and fun. Not only that, but I met my best friend because I was posting my artwork online. We talk daily via instant messages, despite the fact that we live three hundred miles apart.

Let me back up a little. I was twelve years old when I first posted my written works onto the Internet. It was on a just-for-students school forum, so there was a certain amount of security involved. Security: that's the main appeal of copyright law. The stories I posted were mine, and mine alone, and that's what made them wonderful.

It was on this school forum that I met my best friend. She loved my work, and showed her own to me. We got to emailing, and, well… the rest is history.

But here's the thing: how in the world would a twelve-year-old be able to comprehend- let alone pay for- registration for her work? Why couldn't she just post her work, and rest easy, knowing it was automatically protected because she was its creator? Suppose a less honest student saw the work, copied it, and published it in a magazine, and then refused to give any

credit or royalties to that girl? This actually happens. And under your new laws, it would be almost impossible for that girl to fight back. This isn't just copying: this is theft, this is immoral, and this is the best possible way to squelch a creative mind.

If these new laws had been in place when I first wanted to publish my art, I would've been too afraid to do so, and never would've met my best friend, who later went on to save my life.

I'm an adult now, but I'm still as protective of my work as my twelve-year-old self was. Current copyright laws serve their needs and protect business, freelancers, and many other creators, including myself. Why would you change that? As the saying goes, "don't fix it if it ain't broke, because you might break it in the process and make a lot of people very angry."

Most artists can barely pay rent, let alone the fees to register their work. Thieves would run rampant in the art community, making profit from someone else's hard work. Honest artists would be frustrated and alienated. Sensible heads would retract their work from the public and rob our already floundering society of their precious gifts. If you handed a toddler your cell phone and they broke it, would you let them keep playing with it?

Changes to copyright law will make stealing art easy. That's not a good thing, except for the thieves. Under these new laws, I could paint a replica of Van Gogh's *Starry Night*, rename it *Blue Swirlies*, and then make a million off it: just so long as I registered it, that is.

Say, that gives me an idea…

Thank you for your time,

-Elizabeth

P.S. If you would like to discuss this, I included my email address on the form.