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For professional photographers, copyright registration is vital for defending rights in our images. Today, like never before, our images are shared, copied, "pinned", blogged, tweeted and generally used and distributed more than ever. The moment an image appears online, we, as creators, lose control over its use and application. To be able to protect our images, it is therefore imperative for the copyright registration process to be as streamlined and as affordable as possible.

Image registration with the Copyright Office can lead to registration fees in the hundreds per year under the CURRENT regulation. If the proposed fees were to go into effect, the cost could rise in the thousands. I believe this to be out of reach for many photographers and creators and would certainly discourage most of us from registering.

Furthermore it would create a two-class system of photographers: the established ones who could potentially afford the high fees and the new, up-and-coming ones who simply can't legitimize the cost.

Making the registration process more expensive is not a way for the Copyright Office and the Library of Congress to fulfill its mission "To promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries" (U.S. Constitution, Article 1, Section 8)

I urge you to not increase the fees for this important service. If anything, the registration process should be simplified and made more affordable for everyone.

Regards,

Sebastian Artz