July 19, 2015

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

Thank you for collecting feedback and information.

I am writing to you as an artist with a part-time business that I use to help support my family. Copyright law currently helps to protect me, and it is an issue that is very important to us.

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

Currently, my largest challenge is one of advertising. Because I create my own graphic artworks, and am a small business, my main challenge is not of getting a hold of graphics, but of letting people know I have them.

Publishing my artwork on-line is an absolutely vital step for my business. In fact, the more artwork I have published on-line, the more valuable it becomes. People prefer to buy from artists whose style they can easily recognize, and in this current age of the internet the best method is on-line publishing.

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

The most significant challenge is people finding my artwork and removing my information from it. Then I must contact the web host or business. Fortunately, I own the copyright as soon as I create the artwork, so this has never been out of my reach.

Currently, many people feel they have a right to artwork as soon as they see it on the internet. This makes the secondary challenge a lack of education about who owns the rights to artwork.

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

I can not possibly afford to register every work of art I make. I am a small business. The bulk of my business is selling daily paintings – I could not possibly register my paintings every day. I could not even register only the paintings I plan to make prints of.

I depend on being able to create art, post it to social media, retain the Copyrights to my paintings, and then sell those paintings.

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?

I don't currently have any. If I wish to use a photograph or other graphic art work I find a small business owner, read the contract, and then purchase the appropriate package for my needs.

It is very easy to do.

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

There are currently many businesses who thrive on taking artwork and hoping to out finance any legal Copyright holders. Please don't make it easier for big businesses to take advantage of artists.

6. What are the most significant challenges artists would face if these new copyright proposals become law?

I would absolutely lose my business. In addition, any work I had previously published on-line could end up as orphaned work, and I would lose that, too. It would be devastating. There would no longer be a reason to make and share artwork, because the price of sharing it would be too high.

Thank you for your time,
Abigail Miller