July 20, 2015

Maria Pallante
Register of Copyrights
U.S. Copyright Office
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20559-6000

RE: Notice of inquiry, Copyright Office, Library of Congress
Copyright Protection of Certain Visual Works (Docket No. 2015-01)

Dear Ms. Pallante and the Copyright Office Staff:

I am an adept digital artist who enjoys posting my art online to share an idea with others and see what they think of it. Through art. And a very big problem with doing that is art theft, which is already rampant throughout the online community. With this new Orphan Works act it's going to make it pretty much impossible to keep the work they worked very hard on from being stolen and sold for profit by people who wanna profit from other peoples work. And that's not right. Some people make their income this way, either for emergency situations or as a full-time job, and they do not need someone to come along, steal their work, and make money off it like *nothing*.

I don't think that's how America should work.

I'll answer your questions to the best of my abilities so hopefully you'll see that this is not what the people want.

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

Having someone right-click, hit “Save as…”, repost, and claim ownership on digital pieces I’ve worked hours on. Especially when those people make money on pieces I do for commissions, or pieces I show to everyone for free. It’s so frustrating, especially when your art gets edited, or a new watermark on it from the other person. Also, artists being scammed out of work by people who abuse PayPal. But that’s another issue.

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

Being able to copyright your works of art so no one can get away profiting off your work. Unfortunately, current copyright law and this act you’re creating don’t handle the digital side of copyright very well. Most artists can’t afford to copyright *every single piece they make,* like big companies can. Some are lucky if their art can pay all their bills. A lot of artists are freelancers as well, so they don’t have a legal time to fight for them everytime someone wants to take credit for their work. It’s a major drag.

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

Money and qualification/difficulty applying.

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?

Finding ways to contact the original artist for permission or payment for use of their work, problems using a payment format that doesn’t cater to digital art as a means of service (looking at you, PayPal), and the aforementioned rampant art theft amongst many online communities.

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

Remember that as time changes, so too does art and how it's made and distributed, and that there is a whole subset of artists who will suffer immensely from this act you're proposing. A lot of people I know online make a livelihood and income out of their work online, and it's very important that they be able to do so without any old Joe Shmoe scrolling along and taking credit for their hard work. It's not fair, and Justice should be fair for everyone.

I know this letter might not be very formal, but that's because I'm taking to you as a peer, a friend even. Please don't send me and other digital artists down the creek without a paddle, we'll sink. We need to be able to protect our work from being stolen, and to be able to create and distribute easily, and without concern for our well-being. Please hear me when I say, "Do not go through with this act, it's going to hurt not only a lot of content creators, it's going to hurt an entire medium of how art is made and shared. And it's gonna suck."