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{*\generator Msftedit 5.41.21.2509;}\viewkind4\uc1\pard\f0\fs20 \b Dalel Harrison, Artist/Illustrator\par
Houston, TX\b0\par
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Before I begin this letter, I'd simply like to thank you for allowing us - artists as a whole, individual, and community - the chance to comment on the matter and give us the chance to reason why this law would effect us. It's highly appreciated and I'm sure many others can agree.\par
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This letter is being written to, more-or-less, testify against the new copyright law being put forth. I, along with many other artists, feel this law would violate our rights. Rights to simply allowing ourselves the freedom to express who we are. While this bill may have the best intentions or the worst, I feel it is my duty to stand up for what has become my life and what makes myself and other artists who they are.\par
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1. \b What are the most significant challenges related to monetizing and/or licensing photographs, graphic artworks, and/or illustrations? \par
\b0 Many people who aren't aware or even are aware, tend to steal from artists. Whether it be for their one whole day of attention, or because they enjoy putting us under stress, or even because they do it just to do it. The copyright law now, while it does guarentee our protection, is \i ignored\i0 or unknown. They don't realize that it is illegal to republish, post, etc. an artist's piece without permission.\par
I and many other artists who are either just beginning or have been creating beautiful imagery, music, stories, and so on, would agree that instead of a new law, it would be in everyone's best interest to promote the copyright law. Educate the public on what it means to have our work under copyright. Our biggest ally in this case is knowledge, while the biggest enemy is being uninformed.\par
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2. \b What are the most significant enforcement challenges for photographers, graphic artists, and/or illustrators? \b0\par
An excellent question that has me thinking this over. The most significant enforcement challenges, would be the fact as in my previous answer: many are unaware that it being "just a photo" or "just a story," it comes with copyright. They don't know they could be sent to jail, they don't know they could receive a fine. The public needs to be educated with the current laws, and as it stands, is already a fantastic law. Why should an artist have to "sign up" each of their works? \par
They created it. They spent lengthy amounts of time working on it. They have their own style. Why should they have to register it as their own when they deserve the right to have it automatically protected? Why should they have to enforce the fact that they created a beautiful piece when they simply deserve the right to automatically \i their work\i0 as \i their work\i0 ?\par
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3. \b What are the most significant registration challenges for photographers, graphic artists, and/or illustrators? \b0\par
The most significant registration challenges would be finding a promising and safe place to register their work under, and if they had a fee to register each of their works, we would begin to wonder why should we pay for something we did on our own? No one should have to pay for something they did. It's rightfully their's.\par
The other challenge with registration would be the fact that some of us can't do so. It's a waste of time if you have well over 300+ pieces of artwork and you have to register each one. We deserve the rights to automatically be protected and let everyone else know "hey, this is mine, steal it and you're in trouble."\par
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4\b . What are the most significant challenges or frustrations for those who wish to make legal use of photographs, graphic art works, and/or illustrations?\b0 \par
For some it could be not having the materials for good quality. Others it could be the fact that their imagery is so well-known that they have to put up with theft quite often. But, despite this, as we are currently still protected with the current copyright laws, their artwork is still their's and people who respect and are fully aware of this law know the difference between who is real and who isn't.\par

As a whole, the true artists in our industry as one might call it, help each other when it comes to artwork. We protect each other like we're family because we know how frustrated we would feel if someone just ignored the consequences. We look up to one another for guidance. And we'e stood by the copyright laws like its our home, our safe house. If this changes? Its like leaving someone out in the middle of nowhere with bears chasing after you for a meal.\par
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5. \b What other issues or challenges should the Office be aware of regarding photographs, graphic artworks, and/or illustrations under the Copyright Act? \par
\b0 Other issues? Education to the public about copyright and the consequences behind it. Some artists may not have dealt with any trouble regarding their artwork and theft (yet, hopefully never), but we all have or will witness the stress other artists are put under when their art is reposted without a second thought. We don't want this to happen to anybody. Ever.\par
So what could the Office do to help? Maybe make it something that must be learned in-school during computer labs. Or even in art class. Its an issue we should have learned sooner than we did or when it should have been mentioned.\b\par
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\b0 6. \b What are the most significant challenges artists would face if these new copyright proposals become law?\par
\b0 The most significant challenges we would face is the fact we aren't protected anymore. We wouldn't have a job to look forward to anymore. We'd be left to face a world so cruel that we can't turn to our escape without worrying, maybe even crying over the fact a law replaced something we had the right and freedom to. We as human beings, not just artists alone, deserve to do a job we love. Something that we can wake up and do with a smile on ours face.\par
The thing that makes most people unhappy, as I've observed in the people who work jobs that they never truly want, is the fact that it wasn't what they wanted. It wasn't what they were special at. As an artist, I feel like I can't serve my country, my family, or even myself when it comes to all these other ordinary things. I've never been good at anything else other than art for my entire life. We often degrade ourselves, sure, but we secretly admire ourselves when we see improvement.\par
Art isn't worthless. Art isn't just a couple lines sometimes splashed with some colors. Art isn't created within one minute. We express ourselves with the hours it took to get something drawn for either ourselves or for someone else who was willing to want a piece for themselves from someone they may look up to. When someone is happy with how a piece turns out, we can't help but smile and be proud of ourselves.\par
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Aside from the questions and answers of my own response above, I apologize if any of this comes off as "childish" or incompetant. I am simply a girl in high school. Art is who I am and I can't stand on the side and act like this bill wouldn't effect my future. I'm sure there will be many other letters much more - for lack of a better word - astounding then this could ever be. But I know I've gotten my statement across not only for myself but for many others.\par
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So please, for the love of whoever-you-may-believe-or-don't-believe-in, please do not change the laws. They're excellent as is. Its the people who don't educate themselves and the people who don't educate them who are in the wrong. Don't let this bill pass.\b\par
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