To: 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

To Whom it May Concern:

Thank you for allowing us to share our experiences as visual artists regarding copyright and the selling of our work.

I am an aspiring illustrator in the last year of my undergraduate degree (for illustration), and am now trying to launch a career. I have worked as a designer, and have published my art online or in independent publications for a decade.

I will be answering the questions that are most relevant to my situation.

• **The most significant challenges in monetizing and licensing my work** involve a culture where people are unaware that they must license artwork in order to use it. Not all illustrators start out receiving pay from major publications run by people who are familiar with this concept; we are commissioned by smaller organizations and must not only sell ourselves as artists, but the concept that we have inherent rights to our work. Also, having worked as a designer, it is fairly common for clients to insist on treating images found in a Google image search as a resource for free artwork. Illustrators are competing against this as well.

• **Enforcement challenges are similar to registration challenges** for illustrators like me, in trying to establish a name and brand, and develop my work as a relative beginner to the industry. In short I cannot afford it. When I graduate in a few short months my student loan debt will be very significant, limiting the time and resources available for promotion. This is not a unique situation as other classmates will have this exact problem. With the funds I make as an artist I will need to promote my work, support myself, and pay my debts. The added time and money necessary to register each individual work (which is also significant; as an amateur I make roughly 150 pieces a year and anticipate that full-time work as an illustrator will increase this amount), or litigate in the event that my work is used without permission (which *has* happened already, and has only been resolved through luck) obstructs a career that already requires a lot of personal time and resources.

If the intent of copyright law is to protect a creator's livelihood through proper attribution/ protection of their intellectual property, some impending measures seem counterproductive.

Thank You,
Laura Tharp