Dear Sir or Madam,

I cannot claim that my livelihood depends on the use of the works I produce, as I have not “made it” in the world of art, but I know plenty of people whose lives will be drastically changed as a result of the “orphan works” policy in the new copyright act, and not for the better.

The visual arts, from a business standpoint, is already one of the least reliable careers one could ever enter—artists are required to shell out large amounts of money for expensive equipment and materials (especially if his or her work is digital), and in return, they are expected to work for pennies, if not for the false compensation of “exposure”. Even the work that they do for their own projects is at constant risk of being stolen and profited from by unrelated parties. This “orphan works” rule will further justify taking away a creator’s hard work with no compensation or credit.

And yet, we are *needed*. Every product that ever passes through a consumer’s hands was touched by an artist. Artists design the computers we use, the cars we drive, our clothes, the toys our children play with, our movies. Artists should be encouraged to create, not discouraged with the threat of their work getting taken away from them. Any other profession would NEVER allow someone’s work to go unpaid and uncredited. People who create should not be the sole exception, and they should be protected, not taken advantage of. Please halt this policy, and work towards a copyright law that will allow creators to maintain ownership of what they create, without worry of having it taken and used without their consent.

Thank you for your consideration.

--Alysha Kawamoto