July 16, 2015

The United States Copyright Office
Washington, D.C.

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Christopher F. Payne. I am a professional illustrator with 35 years experience working for such publications as Time Magazine, Sports Illustrated, The Atlantic Monthly, Boys Life, The New Yorker, The New York Times, the Washington Post and more. I have 18 published Children's Books, with more on the horizon. I have won Gold and Silver Medals from the Society of Illustrators in New York and Los Angeles and have had my art displayed in The National Portrait Gallery, The Norman Rockwell Museum, The Cincinnati Art Museum, The Huntington Museum of Art and the Dehesh Art Museum and numerous college galleries.

It has come to my attention that a "new" Copyright Act is being proposed that will have severe consequences on independent artists who lay it on the line every day as independent contractors. We create our art with out any safety net and no more protection than that given to us in the 1978 Copyright Act and the 2000 Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

The "new" Copyright Act will have a negative effect and void those protections gained in those two Copyright Acts by pressuring artists to register their art to keep those rights. That would be horribly time consuming and abusively costly for an individual artist to absorb. By virtue of being the creator of their art, those copyright protections should remain automatic as granted in those Copyright Acts.

The language with regards to "orphaned works", this bill allow "unregistered works" to become orphaned, thus making those previously protections toothless and of no value to those they were intended to protect. Much of the art these artists create has untold potential in retail markets and beyond from its original function. Allowing others to profit from our work as opposed us, the artist who created those works is not in the spirit of this great country.

As this new Copyright Act evaporates our copyright protection for our new works, who will benefit from this law? Sadly, well-funded corporate entities will use this bill as a way to profit from the weakening of the rights granted to the individual? It is those who have the money, the Internet infrastructure and legal team to build the mechanism to turn images they did not create into profits for themselves who are behind this "new" Copyright Act.

As one who teaches college level students, I know they share same dream to live independently, creating new works of art. I ask that you not allow this new bill pass as it is currently constructed. Understand that any new Copyright Act must keep the protections of the copyrights in the hands of the creators of the art. Allow them the right to earn their living from the work they create free from predatory agents seeking government mandated loopholes to pirate their art for pieces of silver.

Respectfully,

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