Dear Copyright Departments,

Hello, my name is Clio, Im 17 and an aspiring artist. I'm writing to voice an opinion about the “Orphan Works” contract act. Please understand the term, “starving artist” can be a real statement many times, and how a person can prevent that is commissioning artwork, selling their artwork, and not having it publicly shared unless they choose so. I know many artists who are barely getting by but doing so by creating art, selling it for people willing to buy. This bill by preventing the private owning of the work they create, prevents artists, companies, to earn a reward for their efforts. Don't you get through work everyday knowing you will be payed in some way? For myself it makes me work harder, take the increasing flow of angry customers, the angry snaps of my boss, and the fatigue after a long day if I know that payday is around the corner. When I tell members of my family I want to be an artist they already get nervous, because it is usually not a comfortable living with the promise of a pay check. But I know there is success in creating art in a visual world, if one works hard enough. However if a person, maybe a young person like myself, would not register their work with the registries perhaps of either not thinking much about it or does not have the money to do so, they would be forced to make all that hard work public. Others would take it and use it to their wishes, clothing companies, others would call it their work. That makes creating art so much harder when its already a fragile process.

People who are trying to create something larger, perhaps a movie, comics, a line of patterns, forms of media they are trying to work on quietly until they are ready to release it would be forced to pay even more to not have it taken away from them. Not to say art should be for public, but going on the internet for five minutes you will see free art is everywhere, with the permission of the artist, and if you were to use it in commercial settings you give them a portion of the money. I drew a character from a T.V. show, I stated anyone is free to use it, I wrote down the television show it was from so it could further benefit them, and the pattern I used on the character's shirt was not mine so I stated the source from that. Those were all the respectable things to do, I even stated the program I used to draw it. With my permission people are free to use it, yet I put my signature on the piece so people could see it. If I wanted to keep this private domain, put a watermark on it until it would sell; maybe sell it to a clothing company ect, that would be my right. It's the product I have created and its the consumer's part to pay for it.

I understand if the person payed the fee to keep it private this can continue, but the matter of the fact many people could not afford to do so. Even if the fee was seemingly low many artists create many pieces a day, and the price would add up fast. The only companies that probably could would be larger corporations, furthering the separation between smaller artists and the people at Disney. You would create a black market of art, pirating like there is of music. Even recently weren't there efforts made to counteract that pirating? Why reverse that with a visual medium?

If anyone took the time to read this I appreciate it, and please understand that artists try very hard to do what they love and provide themselves food. This bill would make it so much harder.

-Clio Wilkerson. 7/20/2015