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Dear Copyright Office,

I am an illustrator, visual artist and musician who graduated from Parsons School of Design in 1987, majoring in Illustration and has been working as a professional illustrator for 28 years. I am writing to you because I have heard word of the pending decision regarding overhauling current copyright law.

As a creative individual who depends on licensing my creative work in order to have income for the well being of myself and my family, I am extremely concerned about what I've learned about the current effort by Congress to overturn current copyright law. In the 28 years that I have been professionally working as a creative, it's been copyright law that has helped protect what I do and allow me to sell the rights to use my work and thus allow me to make a living. Without it, I would not be able to sustainably function as an artist, and would thus not produce creative work.

As a professional illustrator and visual artist, I have worked with magazines, publishers, institutions and corporations worldwide. In some cases, the work I've done in these forums has garnered, for both myself and the clients who commissioned me, professional awards and gravitas. However, the value of these illustrations can, and more than often does, go far beyond the initial commission for which it was created.

It's important for me to communicate to your office that the value of my work does in no way diminish upon initial publication. Indeed, often new licenses can have even more value - because the nature of the value of license depends on the forum that it is used within. As an example, an image originally commissioned by a newspaper for a set fee may later be relicensed as the label identity for a Tequila brand, and thus have a far higher value as such.

Because of current copyright law, the images artists make can be licensed again and again - because they communicate important ideas for the sustenance and growth of our culture, and indeed our humanity. The exact same is true of my work as a musician. I may write a song that's published initially for my own band's release, but perhaps it may be later licensed as a commercial soundtrack for a lingerie advertisement, which in turn has a whole different set of valuation for my income from the initial publication of the work.

From what I understand, what's being considered now by Congress includes a mass digitization of individual creative's intellectual property by various corporate interests, replacement of voluntary legal agreements between creatives and their clients, and a new small claims court to handle infringements. Please understand that to an individual business owner such as myself, "infringements" essentially means stealing - and as such can quickly sink my operations due to prohibitive legal costs of such a fight. Treating them as "small claims" serves only to lessen the value of the hard, important work that all visual artists do.

Finally, I will close this letter by briefly discussing my work as a professor in the Illustration Department at California College of the Arts, one of the older and most esteemed art schools in the Western United States. At CCA, we pride ourselves in teaching business ethics and professionalism to our students, who pay top dollar for their time in this school. Part of our teaching is the importance of registering their work with the LOC and protecting the licensing capabilities of the art they produce. The proposed overturning of the current copyright law will in essence destroy the futures of these students.

Please do not move forward with the drafting of the new US Copyright Act with Orphan Works at it's heart.

Sincerely.

Adam McCauley