July 4, 2015

To: The U. S. Copyright Office

I have been working and supporting myself as an illustrator for eight years. Almost ten years ago, I quit my job as a graphic designer to go back to school, and received an MFA in illustration from the School of Visual Arts. Since then, I have illustrated numerous children's books, and illustrated for national newspapers and magazines. I am proud to say my work has won several awards, and been recognized by industry publications.

The thought of laws which protect my rights to use my artwork—the source of my income—are in jeopardy is terrifying. My work regularly appears in books and magazines, but once those rights agreements end, I retain the exclusive right to use and resell my artwork as I see fit. This means I often resell the rights through licensing agreements to generate more income. My work does not lose its value after it has been published. It is part of an inventory of images that I can potentially resell to children's toy, housewares, and pattern manufacturers, novelty and gift producers, apparel companies…the list goes on, and on. Copyright law is the basis upon which my business, my livelihood rests. And in the digital era, my image archive is even more valuable to me.

It is astounding that the rights of artists to retain ownership of our work might not be protected under the law. I urge you to consider the effects that changes to the law would have on professionals like myself, and countless other artists across the country who rely on the value of our own creations to support ourselves.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Anna S. Raff