Subject: 2015 Orphan Works & Mass Digitation Act

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To whom it may concern:

It is my understanding that a proposal is being considered to take away the individual right of visual artists to maintain ownership of the images they create.

My background is in the printing industry and I have a bachelor's degree in art where I concentrated in drawing and design. After retiring from the printing industry I elected to take up creating visual artwork again and began painting. For the last five years I have been focused on creating watercolor paintings.

Deciding to pursue visual art again after retirement came as a result of a personal tragedy that occurred in my life. By focusing on the future and my ability to create original and unique works of art, starting to paint has helped me personally in ways that are hard to express.

When making the decision to begin creating visual art again, the decision was not solely based on creating art as a form of income. While I do sell my work and work hard to have my work accepted into competitions, my primary reason for painting is for personal enjoyment and the enrichment of my life. The fact that people I have met and interacted with want to own my work for their homes and offices is a wonderful bonus to me as a creative person.

To have the hard work and emotional investment I put into each of my paintings taken away by making these images available to anyone through this legislative change is a devastating idea.

It is tempting to resort to anger and use words like "cheating", "laziness" or "thievery" to describe the members of the digital world who are trying to make this change to help their cause. The truth of the matter is this is exactly how their efforts should be described. If these individuals and companies truly conducted themselves with a level of integrity their customers should expect, they would not resort to the "easy way out" to capture desirable images for use in their businesses.

My hope is our current protection as artists is maintained to avoid the mass theft of our creative investments. Please take the time to consider and realize the impact making artist's images available to anyone will have and how we will be viewed as a society. Making this change in these protections will demonstrate to the world our nation is unconcerned about our citizens who are gifted with the abilities to make our world a more beautiful place.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Brenda Hounshell