To Whom it May Concern,

It has come to my attention that copyright laws are being reconsidered, potentially allowing for artists to lose in a massive way. I am ill suited to legalese, and may misunderstand much of what the changes represent, so I will state as plainly as I can what concerns plague a layman such as myself. I do not currently create art for profit, yet do regard it as a possibility for the future.

I am a hobbyist, however I am concerned about the loss of rights the new proposed laws would allow for with the widespread availability of creating personal galleries through the interwebs in which I may display my work. Work which is intended not for profits, but simply to show friends across the globe things which I have put time and effort into creating. With the proposed changes, all works would require a large fee to register everything to protect art which is not even generating revenue for myself, and furthermore open my intellectual properties to become copyrighted by another party through derivative works.

Art, in all its forms, takes time and effort to move from inspiration through to completion. Depending on the degree of detail, some visual pieces may take days or weeks to complete. This is a considerably greater turnover rate than written works, and in the case of photography this may be multiplied exponentially as several images can be captured in moments once the setting has been discovered or prepared. To be expected to pay huge fees for every image captured or created is unbelievably unrealistic. The simple act of displaying art online should not open an artist to having their work poached by anyone who happens to like the piece, especially when the initial artist is not compensated in any way for their efforts.

Furthermore, a vast number of young, aspiring artists are taking advantage of the interwebs as a springboard for sharing their work and becoming known. Having little to no knowledge of the laws regarding copyright and the changes currently proposed, these children and hobbyists continue to post in open forums for the world to see, which subsequently become reposted sometimes without directing to the original. Similarly, people post "selfies" and family photos, ignorant of the concept their personal images may become available to any advertisement marketer without need for permissions and compensation as the origin become lost over repeated "sharing". Allowing such works to be taken without knowledge nor consent of the creators is untenable. It is ridiculous to think these could be used or altered freely without fear of legal consequence due to the absence of registered copyrights on such frequently shared images.

I understand that it is difficult to enforce copyrights in this digital age, however the proposals seem to create difficulties for individuals to maintain legal rights to their own material. Requiring every piece to be registered at an unreasonable fee on the off chance that someone might make use of it unfairly is utterly insane, the costs to achieve a registered copyright are often beyond the means of artists, whether they are making a profit or simply hobbyists, as the fees far exceed the payment an artist may receive for the average piece of art unless they have

managed to climb up into the heights of popularity and can expect no less than several hundred dollars income from the sale of every piece made available. I have seen so-called "professional" artists who live off selling their work struggling to get even just twenty dollars from a single image, as each new piece not commissioned outright has the potential to sit unbought more often than those that sell closer to a hundred or better.

What's more confusing still are the individuals who are gaining large amounts of profit creating derivative works from popular media. I understand that the corporations who own the rights to material can step in with a cease-and-desist, having a great deal of legal power with teams of lawyers and everything registered. Yet individuals without those means are at a disadvantage in cases where their work is used in this manner, as it is more common for these individuals to lack the funds to support the registration of the requisite copyrights, let alone the legal costs attempting to take action would incur.

In closing, I am uncertain I have actually stated anything clearly after all. There are many challenges with acquiring and retaining rights for an artist, especially prolific creators and hobbyists. A real challenge is in having the means to properly register work without knowing whether any given piece is even capable of generating enough to cover those fees. Hopefully I have made this clear enough.

Sincerely,
M. Devine