Members and staff of the Copyright Office,

I am writing this letter to you in defense of the current copyright laws which we have in place. I believe changing and or altering these laws will be extremely harmful to artists all over the world.

Art is not just a form of expression. For many people, art is their job. That is, it is used to generate income, which in turn is used to support not only the artists themselves, but also their families. Taking away the rights of artists to handle THEIR property the way they want is not only going to be harmful financially, but it also infringes on basic constitutional rights, ie, freedom of speech and freedom of expression.

When you allow the general public to take the work of another, alter that work, and then potentially sell it as their own, you are taking away a basic right which artists and writers have had to fight to have for many years. It is already very difficult to manage all of our intellectual property, and by that I mean make sure that it is not being stolen. Please do not make it more difficult by allowing people to steal without penalty.

The proposed changes to the copyright laws are harmful and unnecessary. Though it may seem small to you, for people like me, the artist, it could ruin our businesses, our livelihoods.

I implore you to strongly reconsider the changes which you have proposed. Please, look not only into the political and business side of the issue, but also the issue of our freedom to create our own content. We, the people, have a right to create and express ourselves as we see fit. We have a right to protect what we create. Please to not take away our rights.

Sincerely, Madeline Ashwell