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To Whom It May Concern

I am writing to the Copyright Office in opposition to the “The Next Great Copyright Act.” This act is a complete affront to the way that visual artists such as myself are able to make a living with our intellectual property. The ability to retain a copyright to an image and to license its uses is the one weapon that artists have in the fight for the right to our images. The digital landscape has changed our relationship to creator-owned content; this new copyright law is not a victimless piece of legislation. It sickens me to think that large digital companies are able to pressure our lawmakers into stripping away the hard work of a largely working class group of creative individuals. For every piece of work that these companies steals - because it is stealing, whether it is legal or not - they are stealing not just a piece of art. They are stealing the **years** of hard work, dedication, craftsmanship, and creative energies that are lovingly poured into each and every piece.

The fact that these companies want the images that myself and other artists have produced means they have value. That value can only be protected by copyright law. Copyrights are the cornerstone of how I am able to run my business profitably. My images are my business’ inventory; stealing the copyright is not different than stealing my money. This is not to say that my work loses value upon publication - quite the opposite. When a work is commissioned and licensed for a specific purpose it gains value, primarily because it is my right to allow my work to be bought and reproduced for specific purposes by clients of my choosing.

Please reconsider “The Next Generation Copyright Act” - it disenfranchises artists and all creative individuals. If this law is put into effect, the viability of making a career out of being a visual artist will be a thing of the past. Copyright is the foundation of how running a business as an artist can be profitable. Our inventory of past images is how we are able to create revenue and build a reputation - please do not take away the years of work myself and other professionals have put into creating a thoughtful, compelling, and **valuable** inventory.

Thank you for your time.

Meredith Morgan