Dear Congress,

The Orphan Works bill came up in 2008, and that is when I first became aware of this predicament. I agreed (and still do) with the principle of rescuing Orphan Works from obscurity, but I was alarmed at how the bill was written. To say the least, it was not written with artists in mind. This legislation would have made it easy for corporations to steal art work. In the event of a dispute, the Orphan Works act would have placed the burden of proof on the artist to prove they are the original creator. Artists should not have to burden themselves in this way to protect their intellectual property.

In 2008 I was an art student. I read about this bill and I did nothing. I'm older now, and I'm writing my first letter to congress.

I am a professional fine artist and illustrator. I create artwork. Art is what I think of day and night, it's what I talk about with my friends, it's what I structure my life around. I can never hope to financially support my work if your legislation makes it easy for corporations to steal art. Copyright law is meant to protect creative work, not to protect the profit margins of large organizations.

One thing that makes America great is our ability to construct our own destiny. Any American can open a business. He or she has a chance to succeed in their efforts and build a legacy. All an American should need is their vision. I don't want to live in a world where we must join a corporate conglomerate in order to stand a chance. Every independent artist is in business for themselves. Let's make sure they can stay in business for themselves.

Thanks for your consideration,
Lindsay Gravina