Dear sir/madam,

I strongly oppose the proposal of the new copyright act, which will reverse the 'copyright exists upon creation' premise, and instead require artists to pay a fee to register every design they want to protect.

I graduated from Savannah College of Art and Design in 1998, and have been a designer, illustrator, artist, animator, and photographer for the past 2 decades. My clients include Disney, Nickelodeon, CNN, HGTV, DIY Network, eHarmony, iStockPhoto and Getty Images, to name a few. My art has also been licensed as products such as fabric, wall art, home decor, and greeting cards. I have licensed my work with various companies such as Oopsy Daisy, Peaceable Kingdom, Marcus Fabrics, mPix and more.

The new copyright law suggested that once our work has been published it has virtually no further commercial value and should therefore be available for use by the public. Therefore, any entities can use "orphan works" for free, and without consent from the artist. This is absolutely not true.

In art licensing, the current copyright law allows the artist to hold copyright to their work as they are created. We are able to license the same work to various different manufacturers, provided that their markets do not overlap and there are no conflicts of interests. The artist remain to be the copyright holder the entire time even when the artwork is in the market. Even after the license period is over, the artist can continue to sell or license to other buyers. This is the way an artist makes his/her living.

The new law states that the artist must file for copyright to enjoy the basic rights we all used to have. However, there are many artists (like myself) that creates hundreds and thousands of work, and it is not financially feasible to copyright every single one of them. We do need to show our work to the world to gain exposure, and to pitch for buyers' interests. We can not afford, both physically and financially, to file copyright for every single piece. With this law passed, it highly limits our ability to pitch our work to a large number of clients, because now without the basic protection of our rights to our copyright, we have no control to what the manufacturers might do to our work. They could just grab it and have someone recreate it and put it on their products without our consent, and uncompensated. Without the ability to pitch our work to clients, how do we continue to make a living?

Bottom line is, I strongly oppose to the idea that we are no longer automatically recognized that we own the copyright to our own work as they are created. And when someone saw it and steal it, we no longer have the right to do something about it.

If you must do something about the copyright law, either change the process of filing for copyright to FREE OF CHARGE, and change the process where we can file for an umbrella protection for all of our work, otherwise, the new copyright Act just wouldn't work at all other than violating an artist's rights to protect their own work.

Thank you and I hope you can kindly consider my points.

Best regards
Irene Chan