Dear Copyright Office,

I am an artist and designer and have been working in the field for over 30 years. I have a BFA in design and an MFA in painting. My art and design work has been published in various regional publications and I have worked for several organizations as a designer/artist. I still work as a graphic designer, a painter, and as a professor of art at Chadron State College in Chadron, Nebraska.

I teach young artists and designers. It is crucial that they retain the rights to and are allowed to make a living from their work. It is crucial for all of us. If creatives cannot earn a living wage from their original ideas and artwork, we risk losing the future of all creative thought at a time when we need it more than ever.

Copyright law is not an abstract legal issue but the basis on which our business rests. It is our livelihood. Our copyrights are the products we license. Infringement of our work is like stealing our money. It's important to our businesses that we remain able to determine voluntarily how and by whom our work is used. Our work does not lose value upon publication. Everything Picasso or Georgia O'Keeffe created became part of their "business" inventory. It continues to be of great value to their artistic legacy and it does not lose value because it is published. In the digital era, inventory is more valuable to artists than ever before. Our "inventory," our work, our legacy is all we have as creatives. It needs to be protected. Or creativity will be lost.

Mary Donahue
Artist/Designer