Comments regarding the 'Next Great Copyright Act'

I've been an artist ever since I could hold a crayon. For most of my life I have worked towards art as a profession, which is 40+years now. I have worked as a scientific illustrator, graphic artist and fine artist. My education consists of a bachelor's degree in Geography, Art & Earth science, as my scientific illustration focused on geological subject matter. As a fine artist I work primarily in watercolors and acrylics, I have entered many competitions, have won numerous awards and have sold a great deal of my work in galleries and on my own.

I also produce prints of my work so copyright protection is very important to me in that regard as well as with my original art to protect it from infringers. It is difficult enough to make money as an artist, if the copyright law is changed in such a way to make it much easier for people to steal and make derivatives of my work that can potentially affect me in a huge financial fashion.

In addition, it is unrealistic for me to have to register every piece of work I do or have done with a registry. An artist's work does not lose value upon publication, and in this digital age the copyright law as it exists now is even more important. If the law is changed as I understand it, to a form of the previous attempted Orphan Art bill and force me to use a copyright registry, I would have to seriously consider not producing art any more, at least not for public consumption. It would not be worth my time, effort and money spent into producing a piece, just to have someone steal it without fair compensation to me and little recourse for legal remedy to correct that.

Thank you for your consideration.

Patricia H. Gray