Concerning changes to Copyright Law and Orphaned Works

My husband and I have owned our gallery, Walls Fine Art Gallery, for 30 years.

Our artists depend on the uniqueness and rarity of their artworks for the sales which pay their bills, put food on their tables, and send their kids to college.

The changes to copyright law being currently considered would unequivocally destroy their livelihoods.

The paperwork required to register their works, as proposed, would either eat into painting time, if the artists were to endeavor to get all the forms and photos completed on their own, or would be cost prohibitive, if they were to pay for clerical help.

All their past works would individually also require that same protective paperwork to save it from being deemed "orphaned" and therefore open to reproduction by anyone and everyone.

I can only assume that these changes are being considered in order to support those businesses that require creativity for their financial success, but they just don't have any creativity themselves, and they certainly don't want to have pay for it.

I'm not sure who these changes benefit, but I know that the changes being discussed would destroy the US creative community: painters, illustrators, writers, musicians, sculptors, etc.

Artists are not bureaucrats with secretaries and copy machines and expense accounts. Artists are producers. They make new and unique works that (inadvertently) express the heart of our broad society, recording who we all are, with a depth and richness that a history text or news report can never touch.

Artists dedicate their time, ultimately, to all the rest of us, on into the future. We can allow them to continue to produce their work with out the red tape, or we can force them to quit such dedication by going forward with the 'Orphaned Works' concept. And we all lose.

Nancy Marshall