Submitter: Robert M. McLean, Jr. Darlington, Maryland USA July 18, 2015

ACTION: RE: Notice of Inquiry.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS / U.S. Copyright Office [Docket No. 2015–01]

Copyright Protection for Certain Visual Works

As a fine artist, photographer, and citizen of the World and the United States of America I have enjoyed the protection of my intellectual and artistic properties. As the owner of a small business founded on these activities, I am acutely aware of the potential for this proposed legislation to erode what rights I enjoy, make it difficult and more expensive to register these copyrights, and increase the potential for theft and re-sale of my properties by third parties.

No doubt this change is under proposed legislation for at least two reasons, one of which is the explosion of digital media and the hysteria and desire (not requirement) of third parties to digitize and present privately owned material to a world audience either for profit, or non-profit purposes. The obtaining of permission for use of these works has been difficult, and somewhat impossible in certain cases, and that is as it should be, for this is how our rights to property are preserved.

Should any party wish to reproduce intellectual or artistic properties, and find it too difficult, then they always have the option of commissioning or creating properties by themselves to fit their needs. If they find this difficult, then perhaps they would begin to appreciate the occupation of being an artist or photographer, and understand that their body of work is actually worth the work and expense of obtaining permission to use said works.

In our society the artist, in many cases, is marginalized, and in some cases the protection provided by current copyright law protects his livelihood, and makes it possible to thrive through his ownership of their creations. Anything that erodes protection, or is impossible or very difficult to comply with in order to retain that ownership seems to challenge the premise or intent of the intellectual property clause in the US Constitution Article I, Section 8, Clause 8.

The second reason that this change may be under consideration is the idea of downsizing or eliminating entirely the capacity for the US Copyright Office to act as a clearinghouse for registration activities. It becomes obvious as I age that government is eager to disburse itself from the burden of function entirely wherever possible, a shameful development of a slothful society, and to shift the financial and additional recording burden onto the person protected to potentially re-submit all previously settled submissions to an outside party, that no doubt will increase registration costs as a function of everyday business.

I vote for a minor tweaking of what exists already, and not wholesale reform of a system that has been working to protect our artistic properties.