Dear U.S. Copyright Office,

My name is Pieter Wessels and I am a freelance illustrator/artist and have been one for the past 2-3 years now. I've worked on several "miscellaneous" freelance projects but my current focus is in the realm of science fiction and fantasy art. I am writing in regards to the reformed "Orphan Works" bill that's currently "on the table" and my writing is written in protest. Perhaps this bill was crafted with the best of intentions for the greater good; however, intentions are moot when the results are disastrous. And, if this bill becomes law, they *will* be. In its current form, it would be the death hammer for *ALL* visual artists. Why? It deprives us of having the means to produce our own wealth and/or establish our own businesses. How? There are several reasons, but here's the *BIG* one: it robs us of having a business inventory that is *private*, and our inventories are *everything* we produce. How will artists ever be able to fully actualize their entrepreneurial potential when our inventories are up for grabs by everyone and their kid brother? People already steal art; this bill will only make it easier.

Our intellectual property *IS* our economic foundation.

Copyright law is not an abstract legal issue for us. Our entire enterprises are based off of us having the option to decide who gets to use our work and how they do so. To put this bill into law would rob an entire generation of visual artists (and countless more) of the option to realize their entrepreneurial potential to the very fullest. Stated differently, it would rob us of the premier virtue that has defined the American character: *the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter,

Pieter Wessels
Artist/Illustrator/Designer