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The Copyright Alliance has informed me of this welcome invitation from the Obama Administration to share my thoughts on my rights as a creator. I make my living as a novelist and the protection I receive through copyright is what allows me to do that. However, I see copyright being eroded all around me – I am informed almost daily that myriad Internet pirates are giving away copies of my copyrighted books for free, meaning stealing them. And many of the websites where this takes place seem to be “protected” far more than the people whose work they steal every day. For me, it is not only the monetary loss that hurts but the very sense of having what I’ve created stolen and devalued this way. Further, copyright laws are essentially what keeps publishing, as an industry, alive and the more that copyright is eroded, the more all involved in the industry suffer. When I create something, I believe (and the law agrees) that it belongs solely to me and cannot be altered, published, or shared without my consent. Ultimately, this right benefits not only me but works for the public good as well, encouraging and supporting artists of all kinds to continue creating. I urge our government to uphold copyright laws and protect creators, and also to establish tougher laws in response to the piracy of intellectual property. Thank you for this opportunity to express my concerns on this issue.

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