

From: [REDACTED]
To: FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty
Cc: info@copyrightalliance.org
Subject: Intellectual Property Infringement Feedback
Date: Tuesday, March 23, 2010 11:39:29 PM

Dear Ms. Espinel -

The Copyright Alliance has informed me of this welcome invitation from the Obama Administration to share my thoughts on my rights as a creator.

My name is Marty Qatani and I am a freelance graphic artist & make part of my living creating original art with plans to license my art to manufacturers for use on their products. Without the current or even more stringent copyright laws and penalties for piracy, my livelihood will be severely impacted. Licensing original artwork is difficult and challenging enough without the threat of falling victim to copyright infringement. I rely on companies, as well as individuals, respecting my copyrights and paying me for use. Without that, there is a severe possibility of others benefitting from my work, while I won't. This is no different than music piracy and software piracy.

Since the advent of the internet and the digital capabilities of business today, it is easier than ever for less-than-reputable companies and individuals to steal art and design, sometimes selling it as their original art to other companies, both reputable and un reputable. I've seen this numerous times both on line and at trade shows I've attended - art being used without permission and being misrepresented as someone else's property. I was even the victim of copyright violation on a local level, involving the piracy of an original t-shirt design. I was able to take appropriate legal action and recoup some losses, and stop the piracy at the source, due to the way the copyright law existed some 20 years ago. Due to the current phrasing of the Orphan Works bill, I'm not so sure I would be able to have the same outcome, should this new bill become enacted. Copyright infringement is disheartening and expensive to combat as the law stand now. Any changes in the law will make the problem that much more dire.

I urge you to take the creative business owners, who pay taxes and fight to make a living, into account when considering any change to the copyright laws and especially the designation of "Orphaned Works". Tougher penalties and regulations should be put in place if any changes are being made. While it would be great to believe that people work from a place of honesty and integrity, it is unfortunately not always the case. Let's not encourage people to profit from other people's hard work. The lack of any threat of legal or financial ramifications will only encourage this unprofessional, unethical and criminal behavior.

Sincerely,

Marty Qatani

Cartoonist and Graphic Artist

Hyde Park, New York.