

From: [REDACTED]
To: FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty
Cc: info@copyrightalliance.org
Subject: intellectual property rights
Date: Friday, March 19, 2010 1:56:12 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.

I am a commercial freelance photographer and have been for the past 25 years. During that time, and more recently with the explosion of global connectivity through the internet, royalty free and micro stock photography, as well as the near collapse of the publishing industry and contraction of the advertising industry, the still photography industry is experiencing as never before a serious impact on the ability of independent commercial artists to make a living. These factors coupled with other forces and capped off with the recent deep global recession has produced the "perfect storm". Our industry as we knew it is gone. Adding insult to injury, it is easier than ever for our works to be pirated and used without our knowledge, proper licensing and just compensation.

I have recently experienced this personally, with sites such as an information site (which will remain nameless) picking up my copyrighted images from other legitimately licensed client sites and placing them on their own without my prior knowledge or permission. Additionally, I have had a client in breach of contract give my images away for unauthorized use, something I'll have to address legally. Any legislation that chips away at the artist's ability to protect copyright, only weakens my ability to continue to stay in business.

When one looks at what makes up a complete society, independent artists provide the glue and the inspiration. We are the conduits. Through our skill, imagination and artistry, we take a clients needs and thoughts and present for the world to see their vision made real. We help make it possible for them to sell products and services and in this way are an integral part of the economic engine of a society.

Strengthening copyright laws and making it easier and more economically feasible for us to defend our copyright against infringement is important to all who create both private and commercial works of art. Any consideration you can give to helping strengthen our ability to protect our copyright is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,
Susan Vogel

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