

**Subject: The Research Works Act is intolerable**

**Date:** January 10, 2012 11:12:01 AM EST

Dear Office of Science Technology and Policy,

I write as a concerned scientist who has only very recently become aware of the Research Works Act. You will note that I am not based in the USA (but the UK): nevertheless, I feel that the implications of this Act transcend national borders, since all of us who use the technical literature, wherever in the world, benefit from publicly-funded, open-access literature. We benefit by being able to access research that is germane to our own interests, but we also benefit in that the open-access dissemination of published research is a tremendous boon to the sum total of human knowledge. I am truly appalled that some publishers are seeking to restrict public access to publicly funded research simply because they wish to increase the already enormous profits than they receive. Indeed, the fact that this is such a profit-driven Act should immediately result in its rejection from consideration.

The argument from the publishing houses is that they deserve a special right to the profits made by federally funded research since they add special value to the publishing process. I regard this as laughable since I have worked for some years now as an associate editor for Elsevier and thus have a very good understanding of the inside process involved in academic publishing. I can state without exaggeration that the publishers actually do the absolute minimum amount of work required in the process - the real work (editing, reviewing and handling) is done by scientists who are either unpaid by the publishers, or receive a small compensation for their efforts (a compensation that is certainly not in keeping with the profits made by Elsevier, Wiley and other academic publishing companies). I have recently resigned from Elsevier.

In short, I am offended by the idea that someone would honestly propose something as vile and profiteering as the RCA, especially given that it concerns publicly funded research, and I reject the suggestion that publishers somehow 'deserve' special financial rights to the work they publish.

Thank you for your time in considering this email.

--

Dr Darren Naish  
Ocean and Earth Science  
National Oceanography Centre, Southampton  
University of Southampton  
Southampton SO14 3ZH  
UK