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**To:** [FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty](mailto:FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty); [info@copyrightalliance.org](mailto:info@copyrightalliance.org)  
**Subject:** intellectual property rights  
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Hi, THANK YOU Obama Administration and Victoria Espinel for asking – and taking a moment to read on :)

I'm writing as a member of ASMP (American Society of Media Photographers, Ohio North Coast chapter, since 1996).

ASMP and the Copyright Alliance informed us all of this outstanding invitation to share our thoughts as creative professionals.

Copyright has been an issue for me since 1986 when I went into business for myself and began Focal Plane Photography, LLC –

The great news in this digital age is never before have we photographers had more opportunities to sell directly to a buying public, especially our 'stock library' work, yet never before has it been so easy for that work to be used without permission or compensation to us.

Like song writers, we earn our living by creating original work and licensing its use, yet very few people really understand that.

We explain it at least once weekly in our office talking with clients... they wonder, 'if I bought the photo why can't I use it wherever I want?' as our work gets equated with other commodities, and if it is a stock library image, sometimes 'well, you already took the picture so why can't you sell it to me for less, or just give it to me?' seeing our creations as products not intellectual property.

Sometimes I must say, once we have a chat, people are understanding and often comment that, gee, I never really thought about it that way before. Sometimes, not :)

The Intellectual Property Enforcement Coordinator could help we professional photographers, and all creative professionals, in my humble view by an awareness campaign to help our fellow citizens understand what is 'copyright' and what are 'intellectual property rights' and how upholding these rules and protections truly, in real world situations, effects individual professional photographers and other visual and musical artists – who could be their neighbor, relative, local business owner – as to whether or not we are able to earn a living wage and fair compensation for our contributions and creations.

The lack of these supports and therefore income can put creative professionals out of business... I feel certain many real life examples of this situation could be found.

Without education about and enforcement of intellectual property rights, more creative professionals will go out of business or never even be able to go into business using their unique talents.

Art is all around us, whether overtly or subtly, and I would ask, do we really want to live in a country that makes it very difficult or impossible for creative professionals to survive financially and contribute to our society, and therefore live without the beauty and function of artistic creations?

What such a world would look like might be a good premise for an ad campaign :) Even Walt Disney was once an individual artist.

Thanks again. Also an enormous THANKS all around to the administration for fighting for health care reform – another huge obstacle to the success of many of we independent artists and really-small business people.

We made a sign for our yard during the presidential campaign that read "Aerial Photographers for Obama".  
I feel even more proud of that right now :)

Warm regards,  
Yvonne & Mark Sanderson



Yvonne R. Sanderson, photographer /owner

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