

SFWA Statements on Register of Copyright and Copyright Reform - SFWA



On January 31, SFWA submitted two sets of copyright-related commentary (authored by SFWA's Legal Affairs Committee) – one to the Librarian of Congress offering recommendations for choosing the new Register of Copyrights, and one to the House Judiciary Committee regarding its [first proposal for copyright reform](#). SFWA also signed onto a submission from the National Writers Union to the US Copyright Office concerning Group Registration of Contributions to Periodicals.

In its submission to the Librarian of Congress, SFWA outlined three priorities for the new Register of copyrights:

Priority #1: Protection of copyright and creators' rights.

Priority #2: Consultation with those persons that the Constitution establishes as the beneficiaries of copyright – the natural persons who are "Authors."

Priority #3: Coordination with the Patent and Trademark Office (Department of Commerce) and the United States Trade Representative.

SFWA also recommended that the Register of Copyrights should have autonomy and a budget commensurate with their increased responsibilities, but that it should not be financed by registration, recordation, or other fees levied on rightsholders, which are counterproductive to the registration system. The full submission can be [read here](#).

SFWA's submission to the House Judiciary Committee reiterated some of these recommendations, emphasizing the need for the Copyright Office to build on its digitization project to create and maintain a comprehensive database of copyrighted works, including an Author Information Directory so that authors may easily be identified and contacted. SFWA also outlined ways in which the current system of identifying heirs and other transferees of copyrights can be improved. SFWA's comments can be read in full at <https://tinyurl.com/ztf5avb>. Other comments submitted, including those from the National Writers Union and Authors Guild, can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/zd67t86>.

And finally, SFWA contributed to and signed on to the submission of the National Writers Union to the Copyright Office concerning Group Registration of Contributions to Periodicals. Broadly, SFWA believes that group registration should be expanded to include published texts included in "containers" such as anthologies, collections, chapbooks, and other publications containing multiple short textual works. The NWU/SFWA/HWA/ASJA submission can be seen at: <https://tinyurl.com/zrvrju>.

February 08, 2017

Tags: [copyright](#)