

CANADIAN COPYRIGHT INSTITUTE

Established to promote a better understanding of copyright and to encourage its use in the public interest

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Intervention by the CCI to the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights (SCCR 40) of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

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Thank you for this opportunity to speak on this issue.

The authors, creators, publishers and distributors who participate in the work of the Canadian Copyright Institute respectfully note that any discussion of copyright based on human rights or the public interest should support robust copyright protections. Copyright is a human right, and strong copyright protections function in the public interest.

Individual cultural professionals and independent cultural industries, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, are essential to the practice and preservation of the rich and diverse cultures that thrive locally, nationally and regionally around the world. They are essential to education, scholarship, and local economies. Freedom of expression suffers when they suffer.

As conveyed by the Report on the International Conference on Exceptions and Limitations in its General Principles and Ideas, exceptions and limitations should not be the only lens through which SCCR views copyright. To quote the report, “Copyright should not be seen as an obstacle, but as a facilitator.” (para 394) We respectfully recommend that all member states ensure their national copyright laws protect the exclusive rights necessary to sustain their creative sectors, rather than approaching the matter as a question of which rights to extinguish.

In particular, during the COVID-19 crisis, exceptions and limitations must be viewed with great caution. In the early days of the pandemic, creative industries and professionals sprang voluntarily to the assistance of educators and others who rely on copyright-protected information. They had the capacity to do so *because* their copyrights are protected. This crisis confirms the importance of a strong creative sector supported by strong copyright protections.

Thank you Mr. President.

Glenn Rollans
Canadian Copyright Institute

