

As a photographer I make just enough to be at the poverty line each year. During years of equipment upgrades, I would earn less than the poverty line, which is why I have always had to have a second primary job. In this digital world, people often give little thought to copying my business product without compensation, not only because it is easy, but because there is so little disincentive to do so. Currently I cannot take advantage of the remedies that Congress intended in providing for statutory damages. If a person, small business, or corporation copies and uses one of my works, (i.e. my intellectual property), at most I can generally file a "take-down notice" for the copy to be removed from public display. Because of the intricacies of the federal court system, one generally has to hire a lawyer just to deal with the proper filings at a cost or retainer of over \$500. Then filing fees and process of service charges would be another \$300+ to even get on the docket. This process will take at minimum several months to see to completion, and likely years.

Other federal laws already allow for a private right of action to address statutory damages, such as the TCPA and the FDCA. This law should be amended to specifically allow small claims court to have jurisdiction. While most small claims courts have relatively low limits \$1000-15000, I believe it is proportional to the typical infringement suffered by intellectual property creators. Expanding the avenues by which damages may be addressed, I believe, will allow authors and creators to better protect their business product so that they may be encouraged to continue to create, which is what Congress originally intended. The existing system is simply too burdensome for defendants. As a professional I have had my work infringed by corporate media companies, clients, and many other entities, and I simply cannot afford to seek redress from a single one. The law provides me, in theory, a significant shield, but when that is breached, the weapon provided to me is well out of my reach.