

To Whom It May Concern at the Productivity Commission,

My name is Phillip L'Estrelle. I recently heard about your proposed changes to copyright and royalty laws, specifically the one regarding reducing the period of time that they last, and as a person who is trying to make a career out of fiction writing, I have to say that I find it disheartening. Being a writer is something I've always wanted to be since I was six and a half years old. In the nearly twenty years that have passed since, as I developed my writing skills, I gradually came to understand how hard and laborious being a writer can be. It is something I and other writers like me devote time, sweat and money on and we cannot do that if our royalties are severely limited through these changes.

It is said in your draft report that writers do not write for financial gain. I, along with many other writers who I am sure have contacted you to also inform you of this, do. Personally, this is largely because I am left without alternative. I have spent five years working as a casual employee of Woolworths Ltd while trying to balance out my novel writing; in 2010, at the beginning of this, I was working a total of twenty hours and earning myself a good salary. Now, here in 2016, those hours have been drastically cut to a minimal four-hour shift once every six weeks. Ever since my work hours have been getting cut down, I have turned my attention to finding second and even third jobs which has not worked out to this day. All I have right now is a government disability pension, and because of changes to that in recent years, I have to follow a strict set of rules to ensure I keep it so I can get by and work harder on my writing career.

The government has been encouraging young people like me to earn our own keep so they don't need to give us pension money anymore, but with the low employment rates, all the job cuts, and some businesses moving overseas, this is proving to be damned difficult. And now, with your proposals, you are threatening to take away the only thing I have left of making my own keep.

Please, on behalf of all the writers of Australia looking to ensure their future through fiction writing, don't implement these changes.