CONTENT CREATOR SUBMISSION LETTER TO THE ALRC REVIEW OF COPYRIGHT AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY – Education Statutory Licence Focus

I am an author who creates content for a living. Over my career I have published 67 books and have a substantial number of those still in print. This represents my life’s work. It also represents my income, my self esteem and my future.

I develop something from nothing using my time, creative skills and knowledge and my material is my intellectual property – it is often all I have. I create to entertain and educate. The buyer purchases the right to read and be entertained or educated, they are not purchasing the rights to that material. It is my creation; I own the copyright in my material and I expect people who use it to pay for the time and effort I have expended on my creation. That is only fair. Not only do I expect to be paid but I rely on that payment for my income, and as said – for my future.

The statutory licences that the ALRC is recommending be repealed are very important to me. If my work is copied and shared by teachers in the classroom, I receive a copyright payment from the Copyright Agency.

These payments are recognition of the value of the material I have created, using my time, skill and experience. Just as a supplier sells paper to a school for use in a photocopier – or a retailer sells laptops to a school, my work facilitates education.

The system works very efficiently and quietly with very little administrative requirement from me. However, should the change proposed be made, how will I develop licensing arrangements myself? How will I track down copyright breaches? How will I prosecute breaches? How will I afford to mount a legal case? What compensation will I get for loss of income; to mount legal challenges or for the time it takes me to administer licensing arrangements?

I am a specialist in my field, I have little expertise in the intricacies of copyright law, nor the time to pursue breaches – no matter how concerned I am.

I completely reject the repeal of the very effective and fair Australian educational statutory licence system. Such a recommendation is a personal attack on my rights. It is not only deeply insulting, but in truth, quite frightening.

With respectful regards

Kerri Lane, writing also as Kaz Delaney