

Dear Mr Gowers,

I am writing to you to express my concerns about the proposals to extend Mechanical Copyright from 50 years to 95 years. Those of us who are interested in specialist music believe that if these proposals become law they will mean that many (perhaps the majority) of old or archival recordings will become unavailable to enthusiasts such as ourselves. This is because many of the copyrights relating to such materials are owned by major record labels who have no intention of issuing these recordings themselves but will be able to prevent smaller, specialist labels from doing so.

The 95 year rule has profound implications for many types of specialist recordings including Folk, Jazz, Blues and Country Music. We predict that re-issues of such recordings will effectively become unavailable if the rule becomes law.

Please note that these proposals come at a time when many of the BBC's recordings of British and Irish traditional music are just entering the public domain. These recordings were made around 50 years ago, using public money, but interested members of the public (such as myself and my friends) will effectively be denied access to them if the 95 year rule becomes law.

May I respectfully ask that you consider the possible effects of the proposed legislation on specialist music?

May I also request that you, at least, consider adding a 'use it or lose it' clause to any legislation. That is, if a major record company holds a the copyright to specialist recordings but have no intention of issuing them they should lose the right to prevent others from doing so (note that we believe that some of these companies do not even own copies of the material that they own the copyright to).

Your sincerely,
David Bishop