

Dear Sir,

I read recently of the proposal to extend copyright of Mechanical Copyright from 50 to 95 years. This would, in effect, put all recordings apart from those made during the first 12 years of recording history (i.e. after 1910) behind the copyright barrier, thus prohibiting anyone except the companies who originally made the recordings from making re-issues. Because of 'take-overs' that limits the companies able to re-issue most of the early recordings to two - EMI and POLYDOR.

I am a researcher in the field of early Music Hall and Variety. Re-issues of recordings of Music Hall material by these two 'giants' over the past few decades has been somewhere between nil and negligible (in fact in the case of Polydor it is NIL). This is a field that attracts a relatively small number of buyers and it is obvious that the financial gains are no where near big enough to entice these companies to improve their output. It has been left to a small handful of dedicated and skillful entrepreneurs, such as Windyridge and Music Hall Magazine to bring the work of the early music hall singers to our ears. This work is historically invaluable.

I suspect that the extension of copyright would similarly affect other minority interest music such as opera, blues and jazz.

Please reconsider this change and prevent us losing these wonderful recordings.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Charlton

Researcher/Writer

(member of Mechanical Copyright Protection Society and The Performing Rights Society)