

Dear Mr Gowers

I am most concerned at the plans to extend the copyright period of musical performances. The Sonny Bono case in America slipped through and created an unfortunate precedent which the multi-national music conglomerates are now seeking to extend to Europe, disguised as a "tidying up" exercise. Already, some American university sound archives are finding that academic study of historic music recordings is being inhibited.

The big corporations have shown little interest in re-issuing their own 50-year + vintage recordings. They are interested only in mass sales.

Enthusiasts of speciality vintage music have relied on enterprising, dedicated small businesses to keep this music alive by compiling CDs. And it gives some work to printers, packaging suppliers, the Post Office etc. that would otherwise not happen.

So how would stopping these people benefit the copyright owners, the big companies/artistes? They don't want to use the material themselves, but to stop anyone else from doing so.

50 years should be enough time to exploit the performance rights. (It used to be 26 years, extendable by another 26 years if the performer renewed it). How can (say) the performer's grandchildren claim to be part of the creative process, to justify 95 years of royalties? The longer of 50 years or the life of the performer should be ample.

This is lobbying by big business interests; please resist this proposal which would in practice do nothing to help musicians and would merely harm music-lovers.

Yours sincerely
Paul Collenette