

The Rt Hon Jacob Rees-Mogg MP  
Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy  
1 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022

Dear Secretary of State,

### **Uphold UK copyright exhaustion to support UK readers, authors, and publishers**

Many congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy. We are writing to you on behalf of all UK readers, authors, and publishers to raise the pressing issue of copyright exhaustion.

UK publishing is a global success story. Publishers and their authors together generate £6.7 billion for the economy, and we export more books than any other country. This success is built on the UK's gold-standard copyright and intellectual property regime, of which copyright exhaustion is a crucial part. The UK's current copyright exhaustion regime prevents the unauthorised parallel import of international copies of books to the UK, which safeguards the domestic market, motivates global exports, and protects UK readers, authors, and publishers.

As you may be aware, the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) consulted on changes to the UK's copyright exhaustion regime last year, including considering a move to an 'international exhaustion regime'. The #SaveOurBooks campaign brought together a broad coalition of readers, authors, publishers, and other creative industries in strong support of retaining the UK's current regime. The campaign clearly evidenced that the proposed changes would cause a projected loss of up to £2.2 billion to the publishing industry, disincentivise the UK's thriving book exports, and flood the UK with international copies of books tailored to other international audiences, typically American. We were delighted when the government concluded that the current well-functioning regime would be retained. The UK book sector breathed a huge collective sigh of relief.

However, the IPO has since announced its intention to make a final decision on copyright exhaustion by March 2023. We are writing to you to urge you to continue to maintain the current regime, which underpins the UK's £6.7 billion publishing sector, including £3.8 billion worth of exports, and is a key part of the UK's wider £116 billion creative industries. A move to an international exhaustion regime would harm the UK economy, disincentivise UK exports, and be detrimental to British readers.

The UK publishing sector and creative industries are global success stories. As the new government looks to turbocharge the economy and stimulate growth, we ask you to back a UK copyright regime that underpins

one of the most dynamic parts of our economy, protects UK industry and exports, and promotes British culture globally.

We look forward to hearing your decision and working together on the ongoing international success of the UK creative industries. A copy of this letter has also been sent to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Yours sincerely,



Catherine Clarke  
President, Association of Authors' Agents



Dan Conway  
Chief Executive, Publishers Association



Barbara Ann Hayes  
Deputy Chief Executive, Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society



Nicola Solomon  
Chief Executive, Society of Authors