

July 12, 2013

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
The Honorable Charles Grassley
The Honorable Robert Goodlatte
The Honorable John Conyers
U.S. Congress
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Leahy and Grassley and Representatives Goodlatte and Conyers:

We represent a large and diverse cross-section of America's innovation economy -- entrepreneurial startups, trade associations, professional organizations, labor unions, universities, and large and well-established businesses -- with employees throughout the country. While we are encouraged by the fact that your offices have been willing to meet and weigh the perspectives of many of us, we are writing to request that you exercise great caution before moving any legislation that potentially weakens our constitutionally based patent system by effectively making patents less valuable or substantially more difficult to enforce.

The U.S. patent system is the envy of the world. Since our founding it has kept America competitive internationally and provided countless good-paying jobs. There is always a temptation to weaken patents to reduce the technology costs of large implementers, but doing so would only result in the loss of American jobs and our innovative edge.

The America Invents Act (AIA) was fully implemented less than four months ago, and its effect on our patent system has yet to be seen. Therefore, the Congress should be very cautious about making additional changes to patent law until the full effects of the AIA are apparent. Any changes that are made should not undermine U.S. patents or economic incentives to invest in research and development. We encourage you to hold targeted hearings on different aspects of the legislation with testimony from a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including startups and small businesses, to fairly evaluate what impact further changes might have on our innovation economy.

Thank you for your careful consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

BioForward
Colorado BioScience Association
CONNECT
Entrepreneurs for Growth
Florida Medical Manufacturers Consortium
Innovation Alliance
Institute of Electrical and Electronics
Engineers – USA
International Federation of Professional and
Technical Engineers, AFL-CIO & CLC
IPAdvocate.org

Licensing Executives Society (USA and
Canada), Inc.
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Medical Device Manufacturers Association
National Small Business Association
North Carolina Biosciences Organization
Patent Office Professional Association
Small Business Technology Council
STC.UNM (University of New Mexico)
University of Kentucky
U.S. Business and Industry Council