

HR 1908, The Patent Reform Act of 2007 Talking Points

- H.R. 1908, the Patent Reform Act of 2007, is sponsored by Judiciary IP Subcommittee Chairman Howard Berman (D-Calif.), IP Subcommittee Ranking Member Howard Coble (R-N.C.), Judiciary Committee Chairman John Conyers (D-Mich.) and Ranking Member Lamar Smith (R-Texas)
- H.R. 1908 is a product of more than 20 hearings on patent issues since 2001, with testimony from universities, small inventors, manufacturers, high tech, financial services, biotech, pharmaceutical companies, legal scholars and economists. It reflects input from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, the Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Solicitor General, the National Academy of Sciences, the American Bar Association and others.
- To accommodate concerns, there have been more than 150 stakeholder meetings over nearly three years.
- These stakeholder meetings led to substantial language revisions to H.R. 1908 that address issues raised by universities, financial service companies, manufacturers, drug and biotech companies through committee prints, Manager's amendments and amendments in committee.
- H.R. 1908 enjoys diverse support from a wide array of industries including farm groups, consumer groups, technology companies and trade associations, the financial services industry, media companies, energy companies and traditional manufacturing firms.
- The current patent system has not been seriously updated in over half a century. After years of debate and dozens of hearings, it is time for Congress to take action.
- The harm is too great to ignore. The number of patent cases and the size of damages and settlements in the United States in just the past few years have been staggering. Nationwide, the number of patent lawsuits nearly tripled between 1991 and 2004. This is draining resources that would otherwise fund greater innovation, job growth and competition.

We need HR 1908:

To maximize innovation. Uncertainty in the patent process and legal system is forcing companies to shift their resources away from innovation and job creation.

To keep pace with the 21st century global economy. Today's complex technologies present new challenges that the patent system must evolve to address.

To protect consumers against hidden "innovation taxes." Today, elements of our patent law deter development of new products and the opening of new markets by creating uncertainty for innovating companies.

To keep American jobs and create new ones. Modernizing our system will allow companies to keep good, high paying jobs here while promoting innovation that will grow the domestic job market.

To protect America's farmers. Needed reforms would protect our nation's farmers from unwarranted litigation.

To strengthen patent quality. Provisions would assist the USPTO in maintaining patent quality.

Supporters

Following are some of the groups that support passage of the PRA:

The Business Software Association
The Financial Services Roundtable
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council
TechNet
Consumer Federation of America
Consumer Union
Electronic Frontier Foundation
Knowledge Ecology International
Public Knowledge
United States Public Interest Research Group
American Corn Growers Association
American Agricultural Movement
Federation of Southern Cooperatives
National Family Farm Coalition
National Farmers Organization
Rural Coalition
Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association
Computer and Communications Industry Association
Computing Technology Industry Association
Illinois IT Association
Information Technology Association of America
Information Technology Industry Council
Software & Information Industry Association
St. Jude Medical
Massachusetts Technology Leadership Council, Inc.
Hampton Roads Technology Council
Northern Virginia Technology Council