



November 19, 2013

The Honorable John Conyers
U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ranking Member Conyers,

As a leading voice for tech start-ups and emerging companies, CONNECT enthusiastically endorses your efforts to introduce patent legislation that is critically important to America's innovation ecosystem and the U.S. economy, H.R. 3349 the Innovation Protection Act. As the U.S. House of Representatives again considers patent reform, we encourage the House to tread extremely cautiously with other proposed legislation, while promptly moving forward with H.R. 3349. The Innovation Protection Act represents the only patent reform bill which advances the one issue that unifies intellectual property stakeholders across the innovation spectrum.

CONNECT was birthed out of the University of California—San Diego over twenty-five years ago with the mission to propel creative ideas and emerging technologies to the marketplace by training entrepreneurs and connecting them to the comprehensive resources they need to sustain viability and business vibrancy. Since 1985, CONNECT has assisted in the formation and development of over 3,000 companies and is recognized as one of the world's most successful regional innovation development programs. CONNECT is the recipient of the 2010 "Innovation in Regional Innovation Clusters" award presented by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

With our extensive history helping startups grow and succeed, we understand the importance of robust and strong patents. Because San Diego has a diverse and mature innovation ecosystem, we also recognize that intellectual property serves the innovation ecosystem in multiple ways allowing different sectors, business models, and investors to succeed. Policymakers in Washington should be extremely cautious in advancing patent reform proposals that do not have broad consensus among patent stakeholders or which favors a certain sector of the innovation ecosystem over other sectors. The one proposal the broad IP community agrees with is the idea to fully fund the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Not only would full USPTO funding improve patent quality, but it would also give the USPTO the resources it needs to properly implement the recently enacted AIA, which could help solve some of the problems other legislation is trying to address. Since the AIA did not end fee diversion as promised, H.R. 3349 provides a bipartisan opportunity to rectify the problem.

Again, we applaud you and your bipartisan cosponsors for introducing the bill and stand ready to assist you in any way necessary.

Best regards,

Timothy Tardibono

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