

AIPLA

American Intellectual Property Law Association

September 24, 2019

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. Senate
Room 224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. Senate
Room 152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Support for S. 2281, the “Inventor Diversity for Economic Advancement Act (“IDEA”) Act of 2019

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Feinstein:

The American Intellectual Property Law Association (“AIPLA”) is pleased to support S. 2281, the “Inventor Diversity for Economic Advancement Act (“IDEA”) Act of 2019. We appreciate the attention to this important issue and we urge the Committee to move forward with the legislation.

AIPLA is a national bar association of approximately 12,000 members engaged in private or corporate practice, government service, and the academic community. AIPLA members represent a wide and diverse spectrum of individuals, companies, and institutions involved directly or indirectly in the practice of patent, trademark, copyright, trade secret, and unfair competition, as well as other fields of law affecting intellectual property. Our members represent both owners and users of intellectual property. Our mission includes helping to establish and maintain fair and effective laws and policies that stimulate and reward invention and authorship while balancing the public’s interest in healthy competition, reasonable costs, and basic fairness.

S. 2281 would require the USPTO to collect certain demographic data from patent applicants on a voluntary basis: gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, age, military or veteran status, disability, education level attained, and income level. AIPLA agrees with the proponents of the legislation that the collection of this data is important in light of studies that suggest women, racial minorities, and other groups are significantly underrepresented in the patent system. The information collected may then be evaluated and studied and could be useful in developing means and programs to address where the system may not be sufficiently serving inventors in these communities.

AIPLA urges the Members of the Committee on the Judiciary to support this legislation.

Sincerely,



Sheldon H. Klein
President
American Intellectual Property Law Association

Cc: Senator Thom Tillis
Senator Chris Coons
Senator Mazie Hirono