

April 28, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, Room S-221
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, Room S-230
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA), I am writing to express our strong support for prompt Floor consideration by the Senate of S. 515, the Patent Reform Act of 2009. On balance, we view the Judiciary Committee's approved product as a major step toward significant and productive patent reform.

AIPLA is a national bar association of approximately 16,000 members engaged in private and corporate practice, in government service, and in academia. AIPLA represents a wide and diverse spectrum of individuals, companies, and institutions involved directly or indirectly in the practice of patent and trademark law, as well as other fields of law affecting intellectual property. Our members represent both owners and users of intellectual property, and they have a keen interest in a strong and efficient patent system.

S. 515 was approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 2 after a monumental compromise on key issues which had stymied progress on reform proposals in the past. The carefully crafted compromise stands as a breakthrough to achieving balanced legislation that benefits the patent system as a whole. The core of the bill is now sound and ready for the full Senate's consideration—although there may be a need for further refinement and technical clarifications in some areas. Finally, we also strongly urge the Senate to support an amendment that we understand may be offered by Sen. Coburn to permanently end the diversion of USPTO fees.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. AIPLA is committed to a strong, efficient, and predictable patent system and is eager to work with you to achieve that goal. We look forward to prompt consideration of S. 515 by the entire Senate.

Sincerely,



Terry Rea
President