

April 12, 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, Room S-221
Washington, DC 20510-7010

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
The Capitol, Room S-230
Washington, DC 20510-7020

RE: AIPLA SUPPORTS FUNDING THE USPTO

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Minority Leader McConnell:

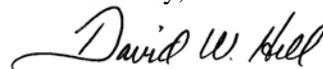
On behalf of the American Intellectual Property Law Association (AIPLA), I am writing to you to voice our serious concern regarding the funding of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) in the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act.

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, trademark, and copyright 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.

We are very concerned that H.R. 1473, the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, does not ensure that all user fee collections will be made available to the USPTO at a time when the Office is in desperate need of additional resources. Unless remedial action is taken, it is our understanding that, in all likelihood, **at least \$100 million in user fees** will not be made available to the USPTO this fiscal year. Most troubling is the absence of statutory “buffer” language included in previous funding bills to ensure that the Office may utilize the fee revenue that exceeds the original projected collections for the fiscal year.

We urge you to make every effort to provide the USPTO with the much-needed additional resources, and we look forward to working with you in a constructive manner to develop a long-term solution which addresses the challenges facing the Office. AIPLA is committed to a strong, efficient, and predictable patent system and is eager to work with you to achieve that goal.

Sincerely,



David W. Hill
AIPLA President