

September 8, 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders Reid and McConnell

As the Senate considers, H.R. 1249, the “Leahy-Smith America Invents Act,” we would like to voice our support for the bill without amendment and encourage you to send this important legislation to the President’s desk to be signed into law. H.R. 1249 is substantially similar to the patent reform bill, S. 23, the Senate passed earlier this year by an overwhelming 95-5 vote. We strongly support Section 18 of the bill, which addresses the issue of poor-quality business-method patents, and **we urge you to oppose the Cantwell amendment to weaken Section 18.**

Patent reform is essential legislation: enactment will spur innovation, create jobs and ensure that the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) has the tools necessary to maintain our patent system as the best in the world. As noted above, we strongly support the improved re-examination procedures in H.R. 1249, which will establish an opposition proceeding at the PTO where business-method patents can be re-examined by experts, using the best prior art, as an alternative to costly litigation. Equally important, the bill provides the PTO with increased and predictable funding. This certainty is absolutely critical if the PTO is to properly allocate resources and hire and retain the expertise necessary to benefit the entire user-community.

This bill has been nearly a decade in the making and is supported by a vast cross-section of all types of inventors and businesses. It is time to send patent reform to the President for signature, and we strongly encourage the Senate to pass H.R. 1249 without amendment.

Sincerely,

American Bankers Association  
American Council of Life Insurers  
American Financial Services Association  
American Insurance Association  
The Clearing House Association  
Consumer Bankers Association  
Credit Union National Association  
The Financial Services Roundtable  
The Independent Community Bankers of America  
Investment Company Institute  
Mortgage Bankers Association  
National Association of Federal Credit Unions  
National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies  
NACHA-The Electronic Payments Association  
Property Casualty Insurers Association of America  
Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association