



January 30, 2012

The Honorable David Kappos
Under Secretary for Intellectual Property
U.S. Department of Commerce
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: Letter of Support Tampa Bay Technology Forum for Tampa Bay region, Florida selection re PTO-C-2011-0066 Comments on Additional USPTO Satellite Office for the Nationwide Workforce Program

Dear Under Secretary Kappos:

The Tampa Bay Technology Forum (TBTF) wishes to provide its full support for the recruitment of a USPTO Satellite office to the Tampa Bay region. With great travel accessibility and exceptional training support, a high quality of life, and superior bandwidth connectivity, the Tampa Bay region in Florida would be ideal as the next home for a satellite patent and trademark office.

TBTF is dedicated to growing and promoting Tampa Bay's technology "eco-system." Through events, education, networking, advocacy, and philanthropy programs, we provide targeted forums to bring technology and business leaders, investors, government, researchers and educators together. The Tampa Bay region is an emerging technology center, especially with respect to life sciences, electronics, defense and software development. Among the ways that TBTF works to further the Tampa Bay region as a center for technology and innovation, are investing in our region's technology employees and keeping them on the cutting edge of trends, and working with our schools and universities to develop and retain a talented workforce, and advocating for our community's at-risk children, giving them opportunities to access STEM initiatives.

The Tampa Bay region offers an opportunity to improve the recruitment and retention statistics for examiners. An office in the Tampa Bay region would not only have access to graduates from the University of South Florida, but also to Florida's eight other universities with strong engineering and bioscience programs. The Tampa Bay Region offers numerous options for examiners to further their education with many graduate programs offered including part time and weekend classes in law. The high quality and lower cost of lifestyle of the Tampa Bay region would enable examiners to live in the beach areas and easily commute to an office strategically located to provide easy training and accessibility with day trips from DC that are predictable, easy, and convenient.

The decentralized, telework model for USPTO operations would succeed in the Tampa Bay region. Tampa is a major node on the Florida LambdaRail, LLC (FLR), which is complementary to the National LambdaRail (NLR) initiative, a national high-speed network initiative for research universities and technology companies. Our superior telecommuting infrastructure would assist in the quality and processing of patent examinations helping to decrease the number of applications awaiting review.

Establishing a satellite office in the Tampa Bay region would provide a stable workforce for the USPTO and offer valuable connections to the entities vital for patent grants. Together with a superlative quality of life, a distinctive telecommuting infrastructure and easy access to Washington, D.C., the Tampa Bay region is an ideal location for the next USPTO satellite office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Kenyon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Heather Kenyon, Chief Executive Officer
Tampa Bay Technology Forum