



*INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW  
ASSOCIATION OF CHICAGO*

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January 30, 2012

**VIA EMAIL & FIRST CLASS MAIL**  
satelliteoffices@uspto.gov

Attn: Azam Khan  
Deputy Chief of Staff  
United States Patent & Trademark Office  
Mail Stop Office of Under Secretary and Director  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

*Re: Comments on Additional USPTO Satellite Offices for the Nationwide  
Workforce Program*

Dear Deputy Chief Kahn,

I am the President of the Intellectual Property Law Association of Chicago (IPLAC), one of the largest intellectual property law associations in the United States. Established in 1884, IPLAC is the nation's oldest bar association focused on patent law. The Association's founding members declared their original purpose to include "aiding reforms in the administration of the Patent Office," and "discussing such other matters hereafter to arise as may be of common interest . . ." Today, one such common interest is the maintenance and development of the patent system, including increasing the efficiency of the USPTO.

The purpose of this submission is to provide IPLAC's comments on the points raised in the Request for Comments on Additional USPTO Satellite Offices for the Nationwide Workforce Program of November 29, 2011. The Intellectual Property Law Association of Chicago supports and recommends Chicago, Illinois as a location for a USPTO satellite office. Based on the criteria considered by the USPTO for selecting satellite offices, Chicago presents an ideal location for a future satellite office.

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### **Location And Accessibility**

Geographically, Chicago is centrally located and within an easy few hours driving distance of other major metropolitan areas and cities with universities having strong science and engineering programs and major corporations, including Northwest Indiana, Milwaukee and Madison, Wisconsin, and St. Louis, Missouri. Chicago has two airports, O'Hare International and Midway Airport, both less than 15 miles from downtown Chicago. Over half a million flights fly in and out of O'Hare on an annual basis on most major airlines. Midway Airport accommodates almost 200,000 flights on an annual basis on many regional airlines. In addition, the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Gary, Indiana, and Rockford, Illinois airports are short distances from Chicago.

Chicago and the surrounding suburbs have hundreds of hotels and are represented by most of the major chains from luxury to economy. A large number of smaller hotels also are available.

Chicago's Rapid Transit System serves both airports and runs extensively within the city and many of the suburbs. The Metra rail system provides rail service from most suburbs and some areas of Wisconsin to the city. Additional rail service provides transportation from Northwest Indiana. Amtrak services many routes to Chicago from major downstate Illinois cities, such as Bloomington-Normal, the Quad Cities, Champaign-Urbana, Peoria, Springfield, and others, as well as from Wisconsin, and other locations.

### **Patent Attorneys And Agents**

Illinois and the Chicago area have a significant number of practicing patent attorneys and agents. According to the USPTO's roster of registered agents and attorneys, the State of Illinois has almost 2600 registered patent agents and attorneys, the vast majority of which are located in the Chicago metropolitan area. The City of Chicago alone has over 1600 registered patent agents and attorneys. Additional registered patent agents and attorneys are located in nearby Northwest Indiana, in Milwaukee, and Madison, Wisconsin

IPLAC is over 1000 members strong. The organization welcomes membership from not only IP attorneys, but patent agents, students, academics, paralegals, and judges. Patent

examiners from a USPTO satellite office in Chicago would find in IPLAC a strong and close-knit IP community.

### **Patent Application Filings**

According to USPTO statistics (current through 2010), Illinois ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the number of patent application filings in the United States—over 9000 applications filed in 2010 alone. The City of Chicago has over 60 companies headquartered within the city limits. Over 100 are headquartered in Chicago suburbs. Almost 30 of these companies are listed as Fortune 500 companies. Many file hundreds of patent applications a year.

### **Occupational Clusters**

The Chicago area has a large pharmaceutical, chemical and medical device presence, with corporations including Abbott Laboratories, Baxter International, Takeda Pharmaceuticals, Nalco Company, Stepan Co., Astellas Pharma US, and TAP Pharmaceuticals. In addition, Zenith, Motorola, US Robotics, and Motorola Mobility reside the Chicago area. Food-based technology companies based in Chicago include Kraft, Inc., Sara Lee, Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co., McDonalds, Quaker Oats, Co., Tootsie Roll Ind., and Morton Salt. The Chicago area also is home to the Fermilab, a center for the study of high energy physics and home of the first particle accelerator in the United States, and Argonne National Laboratories, a U.S. Department of Energy laboratory for science and engineering research which employs about 1,000 scientists and engineers.

### **Access to Universities With Strong Engineering/Science Programs**

Illinois has some of the nation's top science and engineering universities and makes education one of its top priorities. The state houses 175 institutions of higher learning and many of these schools offer science and engineering programs. These numbers do not include the state's many engineering technical schools.

Chicago Universities include Northwestern University, the University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, Illinois Institute of Technology, DePaul University, and Loyola University. Other Illinois Universities include University of Illinois-Urbana, Northern Illinois University, Illinois State University, Southern Illinois University, Eastern Illinois University,

Western Illinois University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Bradley University, as well as many other colleges.

The University of Illinois (ranked 5<sup>th</sup> by US News & World Report for their graduate engineering program) and Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana (ranked 11<sup>th</sup>) are both less than 150 miles from Chicago. Notre Dame and the University of Wisconsin-Madison also having strong engineering and science programs are very close (94 and 122 miles, respectively) to Chicago. Northwestern, University of Chicago, Purdue, University of Wisconsin, Notre Dame, and University of Illinois all rank highly in other science disciplines, including chemistry, biological sciences, computer science, and physics.

Northwestern University's McCormick graduates more than 300 Master's and Ph.D. students each year and maintains four on-campus research centers. It encompasses a wide scope of fields, including biomedical, chemical, biological, civil, environmental, electrical, computer science, industrial and mechanical engineering. The school emphasizes the evolution and application of new technologies and methodologies in every engineering field of study.

The University of Illinois-Chicago College of Engineering has over 3000 undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in six academic departments: Bioengineering, Chemical Engineering, Civil and Materials Engineering, Computer Science, Electrical and Computer Engineering, and Mechanical and Industrial Engineering. The Illinois Institute of Technology offers a wide range of engineering degree programs, including telecommunications and software engineering, biomedical imaging and signals, and food process engineering, as well as a range of degrees in architecture and the sciences. The University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Engineering graduates roughly 500 students per year. It offers Master of Science and Ph.D. programs in the fields of biological, chemical, civil, materials, computer, electrical, mechanical and industrial engineering.

Illinois Institute of Technology's Armour College of Engineering graduates more than 500 Master's and Ph.D. students annually. The college offers programs in a variety of specialties including aerospace, architectural, environmental, biomedical, chemical, biological, materials, electrical, computer, food processing, structural, construction and mechanical engineering.

The University of Illinois has world-class research facilities including the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, Beckman Institute, Institute for Genomic Biology and

Siebel Center for Computer Science. Northwestern University's McCormick School of Engineering hosts 25 different research institutes and centers focused on topics from across the engineering spectrum, including topics ranging from energy-efficient transportation to nanoscale engineering, from quantum devices to telecommunications, and from molecular therapeutics to advanced cement-based materials. The University of Illinois at Chicago research programs are conducted in all academic departments, and the university is actively involved in interdisciplinary research in the areas of biotechnology, nano-technology, information technology, and infrastructure and environmental technology. The Illinois Institute of Technology is home to 34 research centers, including the Pritzker Institute of Biomedical Science and Engineering and the Wanger Institute for Sustainable Energy Research.

IPLAC believes that the large number of universities in Chicago or within a short distance having strong engineering and science academic and research programs will improve the recruitment of patent examiners. In addition, Chicago has six nationally recognized law schools—University of Chicago, Northwestern, Loyola, DePaul, John Marshall, and Chicago-Kent, most of which have active intellectual property law programs.

### **Other Factors**

As of January 26, 2012, the unemployment rate in Chicago rose to 10.2%. Although the cost of living in some areas of the city and suburbs is higher than the national average, Chicago consists of many neighborhoods that offer affordable living and easy access to most areas of the city and suburbs. Many suburbs easily reachable by public transportation also offer affordable living.

The neighborhoods of the city are unique and appealing to a variety of tastes and offer all manners of housing from high-rises, low-rises, walkups, townhomes, duplexes and single family homes. Many neighborhoods are easy walking and biking distance to and from the Chicago business district. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel is working to increase the number of on-street bike routes in the city. All of Chicago's neighborhoods have access to Chicago's public transportation system, either by subway, el, or bus. Currently, the Chicago housing market is a buyer's and renter's market. A large number of desirable apartments, condominiums, and single family homes in the city and suburbs are currently on the market at very reasonable prices. As with the rest of the country, mortgage rates are at an historic low.

The lakefront provides recreational and social activities all summer long. The city itself hosts a number of festivals, art fairs, and cultural events throughout the year, and has two Major League baseball teams, an NHL hockey team, an NFL football team and an NBA basketball team. The city's restaurants and theatres rival that of other major metropolitan areas. IPLAC believes Chicago offers a quality of life not found in many other places.

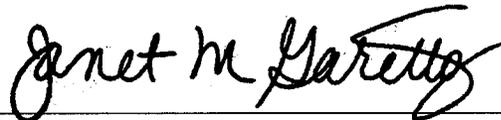
Chicago has locations that may be suitable for a satellite office. For instance, the old Chicago Post Office, located on the Chicago River and in a dynamic area of the Chicago business district, is currently vacant. The Chicago area also has an abundance of available office space within the city and the suburbs.

The United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois is one of fourteen district courts around the country selected this past summer to participate in a 10-year patent pilot program, the goal of which is to steer patent cases to judges who have the aptitude and desire to hear patent cases while maintaining the integrity of the random judge selection process.

IPLAC believes that Chicago offers the very type of location consistent with the USPTO's objectives in the formation of its satellite offices. If you would like further information, we would be happy to assist in obtaining it.

The Office is respectfully requested to give consideration to these comments prepared by the Intellectual Property Law Association of Chicago.

Sincerely,  
Intellectual Property Law Association of Chicago  
By:



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Ms. Janet M. Garetto  
IPLAC President, 2011-12