

MASSACHUSETTS LIFE SCIENCES CENTER

January 17, 2012

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

RE: *PTO-C-2011-0066; Nationwide Workforce Program*

Dear Mr. Khan:

The Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (“the Center”) respectfully submits this letter to encourage the United States Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO”) to establish a New England regional satellite office in Massachusetts as authorized through Section 23 of the *America Invents Act of 2011* (“AIA”).

By way of background, the Center is a quasi-public agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts tasked with implementing the Massachusetts Life Sciences Act, a ten-year, \$1 billion initiative that was signed into law in June of 2008 by Governor Deval Patrick. The Center’s mission is to create jobs in the life sciences and support vital scientific research that will improve the human condition. This work includes making financial investments in public and private institutions that are advancing life sciences research, development and commercialization as well as building ties between sectors of the Massachusetts life sciences community.

In the course of executing our mission, the Center has launched several key programs - through the awarding of a mixture of grants, loans and capital investment dollars - that are designed to create jobs and support scientific research to improve the human condition. We award funding under these programs to eligible entities based on criteria. The criteria comprise a number of factors, including ability to develop new technologies and to protect those technologies with patents, which expand the diversity and variety of life sciences within Massachusetts.

Compared to other regions of the United States, Massachusetts (especially the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy metropolitan area) has a uniquely high concentration of IP related sciences and technologies including biological sciences, pharmaceuticals and medical devices to name just a few. Massachusetts is consistently ranked 1st or 2nd in number of patents per capita (60 patents per 100,000 people in 2008), with its closest competitor being California.

The Center believes that not only will Massachusetts and New England companies benefit from a satellite USPTO office, but that the USPTO will benefit as well by allowing the region to serve as a catalyst for the USPTO to reach the goals and objectives of this new program. Massachusetts has a wealth of occupational clusters including life sciences, IT, nanotechnology, clean energy and engineering. Additionally, the number of patent applications that are filed here outpaces much of the rest of the country and the presence of and focus on higher education in science and technology is renowned.

The Center itself has a committed staff of employees dedicated to growing the life sciences here in Massachusetts. We believe that the staff exemplifies the type of individuals committed to the Massachusetts entities currently supporting the diverse fields of life sciences and their workforces.

Again, the Center respectfully encourages your serious consideration of Massachusetts as an ideal regionally-central location for one of your satellite offices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Windham-Bannister".

Susan Windham-Bannister, Ph.D.
President and CEO