



Software Association of Oregon

January 27, 2012

The Honorable John Bryson
Secretary
United States Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Bryson.

On behalf of the Software Association of Oregon, I am writing to urge your support for the location of a satellite Patent and Trademark Office in Oregon.

The SAO serves and represents Oregon's software and technology industry, and as President of the SAO, I signed Senator Ron Wyden's letter to you on this issue, dated November 18, 2011. Today I am writing to restate my organization's support of this proposal, and to provide some additional reasons for that support.

Proximity to examiners and resources of the USPTO

As Sen. Wyden outlined in his letter, the state of Oregon –home of the 'Silicon Forest' – is known for its creative, innovative thinkers and pioneering, entrepreneurial spirit. With our rich community of scientific and commercial innovators, and growing centers of research and commercialization activity, it is not surprising that our organization counts industry leaders such as Intel, IBM, Microsoft, Google and McAfee among its members.

Nor should it be surprising that Oregon has become a hub of innovative technological advancements, and home to a strong, growing community of startup and early-stage growth companies that are continually developing new ideas and products. While our sister states to the north and south typically command greater overall attention in the areas of research and commercialization, Oregon has also been building a solid reputation among startups and entrepreneurs as a great place to develop ideas and start a business.

Certainly this is a testament to our climate of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit, but it is also indicative of a small-business community that does not always have the same resources as larger companies to devote to the critical work of patent and intellectual property protection.

With over 10,000 utility patents granted to inventors along the I-5 corridor between Eugene and Portland, we are not unfamiliar with the work involved with patent and intellectual property protection. Location of a Patent and Trade Office in Oregon would provide immeasurable benefits to smaller, cutting edge entrepreneurs with limited resources, while at the same time benefiting larger companies and centers of industry activity such as Seattle and the Bay Area, by providing regional proximity and easier access to the USPTO, improving the application and examination process for all involved.

Patent Examiners

Selection of a satellite location must take many issues under consideration, not the least of which is the ability to hire and retain qualified staff.

Like many states, Oregon struggles with a high unemployment rate, and although the software and technology industry has been a strong economic driver for our state, it has not been immune from job losses.

I would suggest that Oregon offers you a highly qualified pool of potential patent examiners: well-educated, highly skilled technology professionals who are either unemployed or significantly under-employed, and *already* call Oregon home.

Their education, experience, and familiarity with the industry, combined with the desire for well-paying, professional employment here in Oregon would provide a number of strong candidates for local recruitment.

While the USPTO would benefit from this pool of qualified candidates, our state would benefit economically, both in the form of jobs and business development, from the activity surrounding a satellite office and the work of patent and intellectual property protection.

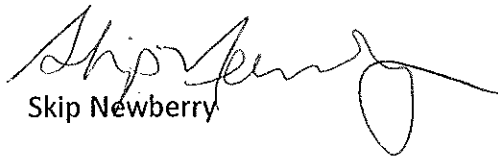
SAO as a resource and connector between filers and USPTO

SAO serves the members of Oregon's software and technology industry, but our connections extend beyond the industry to institutions of higher education, economic and community development agencies, and national and regional industry associations. Here again, Oregon's geographic location places us in a strategic position to connect the entire Western region.

We believe that selection of Oregon as a location for a satellite Patent and Trade Office would offer excellent benefits to both patent filers in the Western region as well as to the USPTO, and we stand ready to support this endeavor to the full extent of our ability.

On behalf of our organization, its members, and the industry we serve, I would like to thank you for your consideration in this matter, and would welcome the opportunity to be of assistance in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Skip Newberry", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Skip Newberry
President
Software Association of Oregon