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From: David Lewis

Sent: Sunday, April 16, 2006 5:35 PM

To: DDP.Comments

Subject: Proposed Elimination of the Document Disclosure Program

To the Honorable Commissioner for Patents,

I think it would be a mistake to eliminate the invention disclosure program, because unfortunately there are people in the United States that are so economically disadvantaged that the \$100 filing fee for a provisional application may be too much money. By filing an invention disclosure the inventor has some proof of his or her date of invention while looking for others to help finance the \$100 provisional filing fee (which in turn may allow the inventor time to scrape together enough money to file a non-provisional utility application).

Regarding inventors getting confused between the filing of an application and the filing of an invention disclosure, this could be mitigated by the US Patent and Trademark Office sending out a notice to the filer explaining what the invention disclosure accomplishes and that it is not a patent application. The notice could even describe how to file a provisional and utility application.

Regarding the lack of use of the program, perhaps those at the help desk could do a better job of informing inventors of all of their options. Unfortunately, an economically disadvantaged person is likely not to have as good of an education as those of us that are more fortunate, and consequently they are less likely to know, or know where to look to find out, about the invention disclosure program. Consequently, maybe the invention disclosure program needs more publicity than other programs to be reach the audience the right audience and be successful. Also, even if the help desk is doing the best job possible of informing inventors of all of their options, it seems to me that even if the invention disclosure program makes the patent system only a little more accessible for just a few economically disadvantaged people every year, this program may potentially bring a ray of hope to those poor inventors. I therefore think it is well worth our tax dollars and our patent fees to pay for this program even if just a few inventors benefit.

Sincerely,
David Lewis

Phone: 408-993-1800

Fax: 408-993-1800

1250 Aviation Avenue, Suite 200B
San Jose, California 95110