

For Immediate Release

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Rep. Goodlatte, Sen. Leahy Staff and Industry Experts Discuss Growing Need for Patent Troll Legislation

SIIA Event on Capitol Hill Draws Attention to Damaging Impact of Patent Trolls

Washington, D.C. (June 4, 2013) – The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA), the principal association representing the software and digital content industries, today hosted House Judiciary Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) for an important and timely discussion about the growing need for legislative action to curtail abusive patent litigation. The Capitol Hill event was the first in SIIA's new Tech Policy Speaker Series.

Chairman Goodlatte discussed his new discussion draft patent reform legislation, along with his perspective on the problem of patent trolls and their impact on the U.S. economy. The event also included a panel discussion with Aaron Cooper, the chief intellectual property counsel for Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), and other experts.

At the event, SIIA president Ken Wasch said:

“Patent trolls do not innovate, make or sell anything, but exist simply to buy patents for the sole purpose of suing legitimate companies for infringement. These patent trolls are masters at abusing and manipulating the patent system. They find flaws in the system and exploit them to their advantage and to the disadvantage of innovative industries, their customers and the public.

“Studies have shown that the abusive lawsuits by patent trolls have cost the U.S. economy \$500 billion over the last twenty years. The good news is that the momentum for action on patent reform is growing by the day. Just today, the White House announced a comprehensive plan, and in recent weeks we've seen hearings on Capitol Hill, a new bill by Senator Cornyn, the announcement of plan by Chairman Goodlatte, and discussion of additional legislative efforts.

“The call for reform has come from industry and government, from Republicans and Democrats, and from the White House and Congress. We believe the progress towards an effective solution will come quickly.”

Chairman Goodlatte said at the event:

“Abusive patent troll litigation strikes at the very heart of American innovation and jobs...The patent system was never intended to be a playground for trial lawyers and frivolous claims. That is why we have put forward a bicameral patent discussion draft that lays out key reforms to discourage frivolous patent litigation and ensure that our U.S. patent laws are kept up to date.

“On May 23, I – in consultation with Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Pat Leahy – released a patent discussion draft that helps to address the issues that businesses of all sizes and industries face from patent-troll type behavior and aims to correct the current asymmetries surrounding abusive patent litigation.

“We worked to strike a balanced approach with our discussion draft, focusing on abusive patent litigation behavior rather than specific entities. The bill contains provisions that deal with the Federal Courts and the USPTO, and the bill makes improvements and other technical corrections to the America Invents Act (AIA).

“Taken as a whole, the bill is designed to positively help reshape the current environment surrounding patent troll-type behavior and abusive patent litigation. Each of the sections work together to reduce the costs of frivolous litigation, increase patent certainty and in the end, promote job creation and innovation.”

SIIA has been playing an active role in seeking legislative solutions to the growing problem of abusive patent litigation. Today's event also featured a panel discussion with:

- Aaron Cooper, Senior Counsel for Intellectual Property and Antitrust to Senator Leahy on the Senate Judiciary Committee
- John Boswell, Senior VP, Chief Legal Officer and Corporate Secretary for SAS
- Charles Duan, Patent Reform Project Director, Public Knowledge
- Mallory Duncan, Senior VP, General Counsel for the National Retail Federation
- Jason Mahler, VP, Government Affairs for Oracle (Moderator)

About SIIA

SIIA is the leading association representing the software and digital content industries. SIIA represents approximately 700 member companies worldwide that develop software and digital information content. Information technology (IT) and software security are critical issues to SIIA's members, many of whom strive to develop safe, secure and state-of the-art products that effectively serve their commercial and government customers alike, while protecting their intellectual property. For further information, visit www.siiia.net.