



Frank Cullen, Executive Director
Andrei Iancu, Co-Chair
David Kappos, Co-Chair
Judge Paul Michel (Ret.), Board Member
Judge Kathleen O'Malley (Ret.), Board Member

September 17, 2024

The Honorable Dick Durbin
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Durbin and Ranking Member Graham:

I write on behalf of the Council for Innovation Promotion (C4IP) to voice our organization's enthusiastic support for the bicameral, bipartisan Inventor Diversity for Economic Advancement (IDEA) Act of 2024. We are pleased to see that it is scheduled to be considered for passage by the full committee, and we strongly urge its passage.

C4IP is a bipartisan coalition dedicated to promoting robust and effective intellectual property rights that drive innovation, boost economic competitiveness, and improve lives everywhere.

Reliable, secure patent rights encourage innovators to invest their time and resources into developing new technologies that benefit all of us. A core tenet of our legal system is that all Americans, regardless of their background, have a right to protect their intellectual property. Unfortunately, studies have suggested that not all Americans may have equal awareness of the process of patenting and the benefits of doing so. Only 13% of inventors named on U.S. patents are women, and Black Americans are around three times less likely than white Americans to be listed as an inventor on a patent.¹

Disparities in patenting mean that the United States is not harnessing its full innovation potential, undermining our economic vitality and future prosperity. It means that more must be done to ensure that every American having an innovator's spirit has awareness of how to protect his or her inventions, which is often the first step in developing what could be a revolutionary and job-creating discovery. Involving a greater number of women and Black

[1] Congressional Research Service, *Equity in Innovation: Trends in U.S. Patenting and Inventor Diversity*, (Nov. 30, 2022), <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF12259>.

Americans in the innovation process could increase U.S. gross domestic product by as much as 4.6%, or roughly \$1.3 trillion, according to one study.²³

In addition to hindering economic growth, persistent patent gaps risk putting America at a competitive disadvantage in key high-tech fields. At a time when China is leading the world in 37 out of 44 key technologies, it has never been more critical to foster an innovation economy that leverages the talents of our country's best and brightest.⁴

The IDEA Act would help advance accessibility to the patent system by providing for data collection that will reveal in greater detail and nuance where we are falling short. Specifically, the bill instructs the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office to collect, on a voluntary basis, certain demographic data about patent applicants.⁵ Such information can help inform policymakers' efforts to make targeted, evidence-based reforms to ensure widespread awareness of the patenting process and benefits of the patent system.

Thank you again for prioritizing the IDEA Act on the committee's calendar. We would be happy to provide any information that may be needed as the committee considers the bill, and hope to see its passage through the committee this week and its enactment into law this Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Cullen', written in a cursive style.

Frank Cullen
Executive Director
Council for Innovation Promotion (C4IP)

cc:

Sen. Alex Padilla, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary

Sen. Amy Klobuchar, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary

Sen. Chris Coons, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary

[2] Lisa D. Cook and Yanyan Yang, *Missing Women and African Americans, Innovation, and Economic Growth*, (Jan. 6, 2018), http://www.yanyanyang.com/uploads/5/6/5/2/56523543/aeapinkblack_cookyang.pdf.

[3] Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, *Gross Domestic Product*, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/GDP> (last visited Sept. 13, 2024).

[4] Jamie Gaida, Jennifer Wong Leung, Stephan Robin, and Danielle Cave, *ASPI's Critical Technology Tracker*, (March 1, 2023), <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/critical-technology-tracker>.

[5] S. 4713, 118th Cong. (2nd Sess. 2024).

Sen. Chuck Grassley, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Cory Booker, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. John Cornyn, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. John Kennedy, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Jon Ossoff, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Josh Hawley, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Laphonza Butler, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Marsha Blackburn, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Mazie Hirono, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Mike Lee, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Peter Welch, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Richard Blumenthal, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Ted Cruz, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Thom Tillis, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Sen. Tom Cotton, Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary