



#### WHO WE ARE:

Engine is a non-profit organization that advocates on behalf of startups for policies that grow innovation ecosystems.

Dear Director Iancu:

On behalf of startups, the drivers of innovation in America, we hope you continue to support the programs and laws that have created a more stable patent system. Startups know better than anyone that bringing an idea to market can be risky, with unexpected barriers and unforeseen challenges arising daily. Over the past decade, suits brought by patent trolls wielding invalid patents was one of those challenges. The unpredictability of the looming threat of suit deterred startup funding and innovation.

But the stability of the patent system for startups has improved in recent years. Startups no longer face an onslaught of expensive and unpredictable patent litigation. And when they are sued, they have better tools to fight back and are not condemned to just pay up. We must keep supporting what's working to preserve this innovation framework.

Here's what you can do to protect the job creators and innovative startups:

**KEEP IMPROVING PATENT QUALITY.** Patent trolls thrive on low-quality patents.

- ◆ Setting rigorous standards to ensure patent quality will create a more valuable system for everyone. We have seen the results, startups are less likely to be sued by patent trolls armed with low-quality patents.

**SUPPORT SECTION 101 AND THE REQUIREMENTS OF ALICE.**

- ◆ Patents on abstract ideas, like business methods performed on the Internet, have been used to terrorize startups for years. Don't bring them back.

**PROTECT IPR.** Startups need to be able to afford the chance to win.

- ◆ The Patent Trial and Appeals Board has given startups an opportunity to fight back against the threat of patent trolls in a low-cost and effective way.
- ◆ Weakening the Inter Partes Review process will only bring the entire system back to a time where poor-quality patents were used as a club to threaten startups.

While the number of patent suits filed is down, one abusive patent litigant can still crush a startup, forcing CEOs to decide between hiring engineers or lawyers. The harm resulting from abusive patent litigation doesn't just harm startups directly but causes innovators and the public to lose faith in the patent system. The improvements in the patent system that have brought renewed respect for the system.

Startups are just beginning to experience stability in a system that has been abused for extortion purposes for too long. Please continue to protect this new stability.

Sincerely,  
Engine