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From: michael worden [REDACTED]
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To: ACUS Information <info@acus.gov>
Subject: Small Claims Patent Court Comments

In regards to the latest study involving the US patent system. I felt the need to give a few comments from my experience. I consider myself an industrial designer/ inventor. I have degrees in Business, Industrial Design and Technology Commercialization. I have been in practice for over twenty-five years and have sought and obtained patents both as an independent entity and with small and large corporations.

Over twenty years ago I can recall trying to obtain my first utility patent. In those days, applications were much shorter and easier to comprehend. In short, there was an evolving structure to the patenting process, which was usually expensive for independents but still fair to all entities regardless of their size, status and resources.

In contrast to past times, it is my opinion that we now have a patent system that is a complete mess. Frankly it is so bad that my colleagues (inventors, industrial designers, engineers, entrepreneurs and business owners) do not even focus on obtaining patents due to the cost, time and resources needed to properly work with the system at the USPTO. In short, it is my opinion that the entire process has been taken over by large corporations, special interest parties and individuals who have backgrounds in law.

I would encourage any government employee (USPTO employee, legislator, elected officials and related parties) to go out and actually LISTEN to independent inventors and hear their stories. Unfortunately, you will learn of horror stories where people have tried to work with the current patent system and been shut down, used and abused. Let alone enduring the related legal costs that can force inventors to give up their savings, retirement income etc. I have been there and I have seen and heard of this hundreds of times.

Aside from the battles with the USPTO that inventors now face, we have to face billion dollar corporations and play within their established boundaries and rules that they alone control with impunity. I ask how many related parties to this study have had to pitch to investors, or buyers at the big-box retailers? Or how many have tried to have their inventions manufactured in the USA while ultimately having to do manufacturing overseas due to the cheaper prices? In short, countries like China are taking full advantage of the political mess we have in our country, and they are using our challenges as an opportunity for them to get ahead.

In conclusion, I hope that all employees of the USPTO can come together to help independent inventors and small businesses for the betterment of our country.

Thank you.

Michael Worden