

December 19, 2011

Letter to Under Secretary David Kappos: December 19, 2011

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Northeastern University



December 19, 2011

The Honorable David Kappos
Under Secretary for Intellectual Property
U.S. Department of Commerce
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Under Secretary Kappos:

As higher education leaders, we urge you to select Boston as a location of the next United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) satellite office. With a vibrant innovation economy and a science and a technology sector that has long been a destination for the best and brightest engineers and scientists the world over, Boston is an ideal landscape in which to site a USPTO regional office.

Several world-class research universities and the cutting-edge science and technology companies they spin-off help make Boston a hub of innovation and entrepreneurship that disproportionately depends on the patent system. According to USPTO data, the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy metropolitan area garnered the third most patents nationwide during the 2006-2010 period. When data from all six states are included, New England's over 32,000 patents and 420,000 patent applications trail only Silicon Valley. This degree of activity clearly demonstrates the need for a dedicated USPTO office to service the region.

We know that Boston's education cluster is extremely well-suited to help improve recruitment of qualified patent examiners. The region's educational institutions produce a unique and diverse pool of talented engineering and science and technology graduates, particularly bio-engineers. And with more than a dozen law schools and some 3,000 registered patent professionals across New England, a Boston USPTO office would leverage existing patent education programs to strengthen connections with the local intellectual property community.

We also believe a Boston office would enhance USPTO outreach activities, improving communication with the local inventor community. Moreover, the continued growth of startup firms in the region's science, technology, defense, and healthcare sectors would help deepen examiners' expertise in emerging fields. This would lead to advances in patent prosecution times and patent quality, reducing the application backlog and easing examiner workload over time.

As we know from efforts to attract a talented workforce to our own institutions, in addition to a high standard of living and a rich civic and cultural milieu, Boston's traditional leadership in scientific discovery, innovation, and education are important quality of life measures that will have a positive effect on examiner retention. Lastly, the region's reliable transportation network, including city-centered international airport and rail links, and existing U.S. Department of

The Honorable David Kappos

Page 2

Commerce regional offices, facilitate collaboration with clients and interagency partners, and allow ready service to surrounding states.

For all these reasons, we hope you agree that Boston is ideally situated to be the next USPTO satellite office.

Sincerely,



Mel Bernstein
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and Graduate Education
Northeastern University



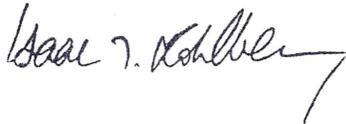
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