

January 29, 2008

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
United States Senator
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Corker
United States Senator
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Alexander and Corker:

As Tennessee manufacturers of innovative products, we are writing to express our concerns about patent legislation moving through the Senate. While we support efforts to update and improve our patent system, we are concerned that this well-intentioned legislation in its current form will diminish patents, undermine innovation, increase litigation, and threaten jobs and manufacturing in the state.

Economic growth depends upon the continued strength and reliability of the U.S. patent system, which has recognized and protected the rights of inventors for more than two centuries. We are especially concerned about the proposed changes to the well-established principles used to calculate damage awards and the addition of a costly new post-grant opposition system that would undermine a patent's enforceability potentially throughout its life. These changes would combine to destabilize America's incentive-based system of innovation and encourage a weakening of patent rights worldwide. In addition, we support stronger reforms to the judicially-created doctrine of inequitable conduct that will enhance the overall quality of patents issued by the USPTO and reduce excessive litigation costs

As Tennessee employers, we are hopeful that this legislation will be amended to address our concerns prior to Floor consideration. We look forward to supporting patent reform legislation that will improve patent quality without diminishing patent rights and the strength of the U.S. patent system. We stand ready to work with you to achieve that goal.

Sincerely,

Adroit Medical
Loudon, TN

Cummins-Allison Corporation
Collierville, Knoxville, Nashville

GlaxoSmithKline
Memphis, TN

Bridgestone Firestone North
American Tire, LLC
Nashville, TN

Cummins Inc.
Nashville, Memphis, Cookeville, Knoxville
and Chattanooga

Johnson and Johnson Health Care
Systems
Memphis, TN

Caterpillar Inc.
Nashville, TN

Dynatronics, Inc.
Ooltewah, TN

PepsiCo
Nashville, TN

Corning, Inc.
Cleveland, TN

Eastman Chemical Company
Kingsport, TN

Pfizer
Memphis, TN

Procter & Gamble
Jackson, TN
Cleveland, TN

Qualcomm, Inc.
Brentwood, TN