

Intellectual Property E-news

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U.S. Patent and Trademark Regional Office Opening In Detroit In 2011

On December 16, in a conference call which included U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) Director David Kappos and Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm it was announced that the USPTO will locate its first Regional Patent Office in Detroit, Michigan. Employing 100 patent examiners at the outset, the regional office is scheduled to open sometime in 2011. In part, this move by the USPTO is intended to facilitate the hiring of additional qualified examiners and so reduce the present pendency of patent applications at the USPTO. According to Secretary Locke, the goal is to "get down to a 1 year review."

According to USPTO Director Kappos, the corps of examiners in the new Detroit Regional Office will represent, at least in part, technologies that mesh well with local industries, including automotive and emerging technologies.

Detroit as the site for the country's first Regional Patent Office makes a great deal of practical sense. As Director Kappos noted, Detroit offers access to a highly qualified workforce of scientists and engineers, as well as proximity to leading Universities. And as Governor Granholm pointed out, "Michigan ranks 7th in patents issued in the United States; and if Michigan were a country, it would rank 9th in the world."

The imminent opening of the Detroit Regional Office represents a significant cost-savings, quality and convenience opportunity to innovative companies in Michigan, the larger Midwest region, Canada and throughout the world since these businesses will now have greater access to USPTO personnel through more economical intellectual property counsel in Southeast Michigan.

With offices in downtown Detroit, Bloomfield Hills, Ann Arbor and Lansing, the intellectual property attorneys of Butzel Long are well positioned to represent clients in this region. We represent clients on the leading edge of new technologies, including universities, automotive suppliers, medical device manufacturers, alternative fuel and energy companies, and others.

We will keep close track of ensuing developments regarding the new USPTO location. For more information about the new Detroit Regional Patent Office or patent and intellectual property issues

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