

beyond the jurisdiction of the Judiciary Committee and as a result was not considered previously, but I trust it will win the support of our colleagues on the floor. I am glad that this provision has been included in the managers' amendment, of which I am a co-sponsor.

My conversations with Rhode Island inventors also made clear that the fear of protracted litigation also dampens innovation. Unfortunately, numerous poor-quality patents have issued in recent years, resulting in seemingly endless litigation that casts a cloud over patent ownership. Administrative processes that should serve as an alternative to litigation also have broken down, resulting in further delay, cost, and confusion.

The America Invents Act will take on these problems by ensuring that higher quality patents issue in the future. This will produce less litigation and create greater incentives for innovators to commit the effort and resources to create the next big idea. Similarly, the bill will improve administrative processes so that disputes over patents can be resolved quickly and cheaply without patents being tied up for years in expensive litigation.

This body must not pass up this chance to enhance innovation and energize our economy. We must see this bill through the Senate, and we must work with the House to see it passed promptly into law. It is true that the bill is a compromise and may not reflect all of everyone's priorities. Improvements to the bill may still be possible. To that end, I expect a productive debate on the floor and a constructive dialog with the House. I look forward to continuing to work with the chairman, my colleagues, and all interested parties to craft a bill that generates the broadest consensus possible.

But we must not lose sight of the need for action. Our patent system has gone 60 years without improvements. It needs repair. Now is the time to energize our innovation economy, to create jobs, and to secure continuing American leadership in the fields of medicine, science, and technology. Hard work and ingenuity long have been the backbone of this country. Let's not get in their way.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNET). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators

permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMERICA INVENTS ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I rise to speak in support of the America Invents Act generally and about the managers' amendment specifically. The America Invents Act, also known as the patent reform bill, has been pending for many years and has been the subject of extensive debate, negotiation, and revisions. In its current draft, it does much needed good to help protect the American innovation economy by updating and modernizing our patent system.

The patent system in the United States is designed to protect innovation and inventions and investment. But over the last several decades, the Patent and Trademark Office has become bogged down and overburdened by inefficient process and outdated law. The result is a heavy burden on the innovative work that is the engine of our economy.

I wish to commend Senator LEAHY. He has gone the extra mile for this bill for many years. I am proud and glad he is seeing his work come to fruition as we finally debate the bill on the floor. Passage of the bill is in sight. I also wish to commend the ranking member of the Judiciary Committee, Senator GRASSLEY, who worked with him, as well as Senator KYL, who has taken a leading role on the Republican side, for their hard work in crafting a bill that effectively modernizes the patent system, while paying attention to the many and varied demands different sectors of the economy exert upon it.

I am particularly pleased the chairman has decided to adopt the Schumer-Kyl amendment on business method patents into the managers' amendment. It is a critical change that this bill finally begins to address the scourge of business method patents currently plaguing the financial sector. Business method patents are anathema to the protection the patent system provides because they apply not to novel products or services but to abstract and common concepts of how to do business.

Often, business method patents are issued for practices that have been in widespread use in the financial industry for years, such as check imaging or one-click checkout. Because of the nature of the financial services industry, those practices aren't identifiable by

the PTO as prior art and bad patents are issued. The holders of business method patents then attempt to extract settlements from the banks by suing them in plaintiff-friendly courts and tying them up in years of extremely costly litigation.

This is not a small problem. Around 11,000 new applications for patents on business methods are filed every year, and financial patents are being litigated almost 30 times more than patents as a whole. This is not right, it is not fair, and it is taking desperately needed money and energy out of the economy and putting it into the hands of a few litigants. So I am very pleased Congress is going to fight it.

The Schumer-Kyl amendment, which was included in the managers' package we just adopted, will allow companies that are the target of one of these frivolous business method patent lawsuits to go back to the PTO and demonstrate, with the appropriate prior art, that the patent shouldn't have been issued in the first place. That way bad patents can be knocked out in an efficient administrative proceeding, avoiding costly litigation.

One of the most critical elements of this amendment has to do with the stay of litigation while review of the patent is pending at the PTO. The amendment includes a four-factor test for the granting of a stay that places a very heavy thumb on the scale in favor of the stay. Indeed, the test requires the court to ask whether a stay would reduce the burden of the litigation on the parties and the court. Since the entire purpose of the transitional program at the PTO is to reduce the burden of litigation, it is nearly impossible to imagine a scenario in which a district court would not issue a stay.

In response to concerns that earlier versions of the amendment were too broad, we have modified it so it is narrowly targeted. We want to make sure to capture the business method patents which are at the heart of the problem and avoid any collateral circumstances.

In conclusion, I believe the amendment takes an important step in the direction of eliminating the kinds of frivolous lawsuits the jurisprudence on business method patents have allowed. I am very grateful to the chairman and the ranking member, Senator KYL, and I support the managers' amendment and the America Invents Act as a whole.

Finally, I would like to say a few words about Senator COBURN's proposal on fee diversion. I think his idea, which is incorporated in the managers' amendment, makes a lot of sense; that is, to let the PTO keep the fees they charge so they are self-funded and we don't have to spend taxpayer money to fund them every year.

Last year, when we were debating the Wall Street reform bill, Senator JACK REED and I made a similar proposal for the SEC, which ultimately didn't make it into the final bill. I just wanted to

take this time to make a few points about this commonsense proposal.

First, for the last 15 years, the SEC hasn't spent a dime of taxpayer money. For 15 years, the SEC has had no impact on the deficit. This is because Congress, in 1996, amended the securities laws to provide that 100 percent of the SEC's funding comes from registration and filing fees charged by the Commission.

Second, even though the SEC collects more in fees every year than it spends, the amount of the SEC's annual budget is determined by Congress, which has continually shortchanged the SEC. The SEC's budget has been in the crosshairs for years, and their funding has been so inadequate that they have been compromised in their ability to pursue their core mission.

Third, the budget proposal in the House would continue the short-changing of the SEC, cutting \$40 million from its existing budget at a time when it needs resources more than ever.

Finally, a word about the current demands on the SEC. We gave that agency significant new responsibilities under the Dodd-Frank Act, in particular to oversee the previously unregulated derivative markets. That is an enormous undertaking that everybody agrees is necessary after seeing the role that unregulated derivatives played in the financial crisis.

In closing, I would strongly suggest to my colleagues that if self-funding makes sense for the PTO, it makes sense for the SEC. I am not going to call up my amendment now or my bill now, but I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense proposal Senator REED and I are pushing and ensure it gets a full hearing in the Senate.

I thank the Chair for his time and attention.

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. INOUE. Mr. President, the Senate Appropriations Committee has adopted rules governing its procedures for the 112th Congress. Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 2, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, on behalf of myself and Senator COCHRAN, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of the committee rules be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE RULES— 112TH CONGRESS

I. MEETINGS

The Committee will meet at the call of the Chairman.

II. QUORUMS

1. Reporting a bill. A majority of the members must be present for the reporting of a bill.

2. Other business. For the purpose of transacting business other than reporting a bill or taking testimony, one-third of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

3. Taking testimony. For the purpose of taking testimony, other than sworn testimony, by the Committee or any subcommittee, one member of the Committee or subcommittee shall constitute a quorum. For the purpose of taking sworn testimony by the Committee, three members shall constitute a quorum, and for the taking of sworn testimony by any subcommittee, one member shall constitute a quorum.

III. PROXIES

Except for the reporting of a bill, votes may be cast by proxy when any member so requests.

IV. ATTENDANCE OF STAFF MEMBERS AT CLOSED SESSIONS

Attendance of staff members at closed sessions of the Committee shall be limited to those members of the Committee staff who have a responsibility associated with the matter being considered at such meeting. This rule may be waived by unanimous consent.

V. BROADCASTING AND PHOTOGRAPHING OF COMMITTEE HEARINGS

The Committee or any of its subcommittees may permit the photographing and broadcast of open hearings by television and/or radio. However, if any member of a subcommittee objects to the photographing or broadcasting of an open hearing, the question shall be referred to the full Committee for its decision.

VI. AVAILABILITY OF SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

To the extent possible, when the bill and report of any subcommittee are available, they shall be furnished to each member of the Committee thirty-six hours prior to the Committee's consideration of said bill and report.

VII. AMENDMENTS AND REPORT LANGUAGE

To the extent possible, amendments and report language intended to be proposed by Senators at full Committee markups shall be provided in writing to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member and the appropriate Subcommittee Chairman and Ranking Minority Member twenty-four hours prior to such markups.

VIII. POINTS OF ORDER

Any member of the Committee who is floor manager of an appropriations bill, is hereby authorized to make points of order against any amendment offered in violation of the Senate Rules on the floor of the Senate to such appropriations bill.

IX. EX OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP

The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the full Committee are ex officio members of all subcommittees of which they are not regular members but shall have no vote in the subcommittee and shall not be counted for purposes of determining a quorum.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES RULES OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the rules of procedure of the Committee on Armed Services be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

1. REGULAR MEETING DAY.—The Committee shall meet at least once a month when Congress is in session. The regular meeting days of the Committee shall be Tuesday and Thursday, unless the Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, directs otherwise.

2. ADDITIONAL MEETINGS.—The Chairman, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, may call such additional meetings as he deems necessary.

3. SPECIAL MEETINGS.—Special meetings of the Committee may be called by a majority of the members of the Committee in accordance with paragraph 3 of Rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate.

4. OPEN MEETINGS.—Each meeting of the Committee, or any subcommittee thereof, including meetings to conduct hearings, shall be open to the public, except that a meeting or series of meetings by the Committee or a subcommittee thereof on the same subject for a period of no more than fourteen (14) calendar days may be closed to the public on a motion made and seconded to go into closed session to discuss only whether the matters enumerated below in clauses (a) through (f) would require the meeting to be closed, followed immediately by a record vote in open session by a majority of the members of the Committee or subcommittee when it is determined that the matters to be discussed or the testimony to be taken at such meeting or meetings—

(a) will disclose matters necessary to be kept secret in the interests of national defense or the confidential conduct of the foreign relations of the United States;

(b) will relate solely to matters of Committee staff personnel or internal staff management or procedure;

(c) will tend to charge an individual with a crime or misconduct, to disgrace or injure the professional standing of an individual, or otherwise to expose an individual to public contempt or obloquy or will represent a clearly unwarranted invasion of the privacy of an individual;

(d) will disclose the identity of any informer or law enforcement agent or will disclose any information relating to the investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense that is required to be kept secret in the interests of effective law enforcement;

(e) will disclose information relating to the trade secrets or financial or commercial information pertaining specifically to a given person if—

(1) an Act of Congress requires the information to be kept confidential by Government officers and employees; or

(2) the information has been obtained by the Government on a confidential basis, other than through an application by such person for a specific Government financial or other benefit, and is required to be kept secret in order to prevent undue injury to the competitive position of such person; or

(f) may divulge matters required to be kept confidential under other provisions of law or Government regulations.

5. PRESIDING OFFICER.—The Chairman shall preside at all meetings and hearings of the Committee except that in his absence the Ranking Majority Member present at the meeting or hearing shall preside unless by majority vote the Committee provides otherwise.

6. QUORUM.—(a) A majority of the members of the Committee are required to be actually present to report a matter or measure from the Committee. (See Standing Rules of the Senate 26.7(a)(1)).

(b) Except as provided in subsections (a) and (c), and other than for the conduct of hearings, nine members of the Committee, including one member of the minority party; or a majority of the members of the Committee, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of such business as may be considered by the Committee.

(c) Three members of the Committee, one of whom shall be a member of the minority party, shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking sworn testimony, unless otherwise ordered by a majority of the full Committee.