

May 27, 2011

The Honorable Lamar Smith
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
2409 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Conyers
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
2426 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Goodlatte
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Melvin Watt
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Conyers, Subcommittee Chairman Goodlatte,
and Subcommittee Ranking Member Watt:

We write to express our enthusiastic support for H.R. 1249, the "America Invents Act." The legislation will strengthen the US economy and enhance our capacity to innovate.

H.R. 1249 proposes several important reforms that will benefit a broad range of industries: it will streamline patent applications, help to weed out weak patents that would otherwise hinder innovation, reduce the costs of litigation, and provide much-needed resources for the Patent and Trademark Office.


Our universities are major centers of scientific research that actively encourage the commercial development of faculty inventions. Hence we have extensive experience with the strengths and weaknesses of the current patent system. We are confident that H.R. 1249 would, if enacted, improve universities' ability to commercialize the results of university research.

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H.R. 1249 reflects years of debate and negotiation, including a number of provisions added to address earlier concerns of universities. We commend the Members of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees for their unwavering commitment to patent reform. We hope the House will approve H.R. 1249 at the earliest possible opportunity, and resolve quickly any outstanding differences with the Senate companion bill, S. 23.

Thank you again for your effective leadership on this extremely important issue for the nation.

Sincerely yours,



Mary Sue Coleman
President University of Michigan



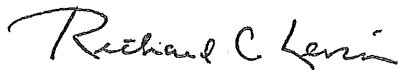
H. Holden Thorp
Chancellor, University of
North Carolina Chapel Hill



John Hennessy
President, Stanford University



William Powers
President, University of
Texas Austin



Richard C. Levin
President, Yale University

cc: Members of the Judiciary Committee