



# COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

DAVID R. OBEY, CHAIRMAN

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## **2010 SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS: U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

H.R. 5874, the 2010 Supplemental Appropriations Bill for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, (USPTO) provides up to \$129 million, fully offset, to help prevent additional backlogs in the processing of patent applications.

The timely and efficient processing of patent and trademark applications is critical to the competitiveness of American businesses and the contributions of individual inventors to economic growth. But USPTO currently takes an average of over 34 months to complete the examination of a patent application and has maintained a backlog of unexamined applications for several years. There are approximately 1.2 million patent applications now in the system, with over 750,000 awaiting an initial review by a USPTO patent examiner. The U.S. economy cannot afford for the status quo to continue.

The Administration requested this additional funding because patent fee revenue is expected to be higher than an earlier estimate. The activities of USPTO are entirely supported by fee revenue, subject to the appropriation of these funds by Congress. This appropriation reflects the Administration's and Congress' commitment to make all fee revenue collected by USPTO available for patent and trademark activities.

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