

Bennet, Udall Amendment to Create New Regional Patent Offices Approved by Senate

Will Assist Entrepreneurs, Foster Innovation by Improving Quality, Pendency for Patent Applications

(Source: <http://bennet.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/?id=8D428119-246E-43A9-8759-1CCD11BCCD58>)

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Washington, DC – Colorado U.S. Senators Michael Bennet and Mark Udall secured a key change to the *America Invents Act* that empowers the Director of the US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to create three or more regional satellite offices across the country over the next 3 years.

The amendment would help create jobs and assist entrepreneurs, inventors and innovation by better connecting innovators to the USPTO; help the USPTO address recruitment and retention issues for patent examiners; and reduce the systemic backlog for patent applications. It would enhance the quality and efficiency of our patent system.

Earlier this year, Bennet and Udall sent President Obama a letter expressing their support for multiple satellite offices and calling for a new Western satellite office in Denver, which would provide a boost to industries already based in Colorado that are dependent on the patent process, as well as create patent examiner positions and other good paying jobs in Denver. The Senators have been advocating to the USPTO for over the past year on the merits of a regional satellite office in Denver.

“More patent offices will give us the means to bring new ideas to market and unleash a new wave of innovation that creates jobs and grows our economy,” **said Bennet**. “We can’t expect to compete with the rest of the world if we don’t have the infrastructure necessary to support the inventors and entrepreneurs who will help create the jobs of tomorrow.”

“Innovation and invention have always been the driving forces of America’s economy, and that spirit will help us maintain our leadership in the global economy,” **Udall said**. “But we need a smooth and effective patent system to do so. Creating more patent offices across the country would help ensure that an application backlog isn’t holding up progress.”

Europe currently uses four patent offices as a recruitment tool and is known for its ability to attract and retain highly qualified examiners, a reality that places the U.S. economy at a competitive disadvantage. Establishing satellite offices in locations across the country, as the Bennet-Udall amendment would do, will connect innovators and businesses across the country and enhance the USPTO’s ability to recruit new examiners to help reduce patent delays, which cost jobs.

The establishment of satellite offices would help the USPTO recruit and retain workers from across the country. Regional offices would draw local scientists, engineers and patent attorneys into the USPTO, which add real world expertise to the patent review process. Regional satellite offices would also increase outreach activities and connection to patent filers; enhance the ability of the USPTO to recruit and retain patent examiners; and improve the quality and pendency for patent applications.

The Bennet-Udall amendment also contains a requirement that the USPTO submit a report to Congress on the progress being made in establishing satellite offices; and whether the operation of existing satellites is achieving the goals of the program. There is no cost to this amendment according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO).