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HATCH, LEAHY AND GRASSLEY: PATENT REFORM WILL PROTECT AMERICAN JOBS, PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Legislation Bolsters Economy without Adding to the Deficit

(Source: http://hatch.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=PressReleases.Detail&PressRelease_id=be351564-1b78-be3e-e005-00475a8aefe0&Month=1&Year=2011)

WASHINGTON – Sens. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) today introduced a bipartisan patent reform bill aimed at bolstering the economy, creating jobs and promoting innovation.

The Patent Reform Act of 2011, which would make the first significant changes to the nation's patent system in nearly 60 years, would create jobs without adding to the nation's deficit.

“Reforming our patent system is a critical priority whose time has more than come. It is essential to growing our economy, creating jobs and promoting innovation in our nation,” said Hatch. “Working alongside Senate Judiciary Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Grassley and House Judiciary Committee Chairman Lamar Smith, I know we can move this critical legislation forward.”

“Patent reform is a commonsense, bipartisan effort to protect jobs and bolster the economy,” said Leahy. “The Patent Reform Act of 2011 is the product of years of careful consideration and compromise. Promoting economic growth continues to be a top priority for both Democrats and Republicans, and patent reform is part of that effort. This has always been a bipartisan, bicameral effort, and I look forward to working with Senator Hatch, Senator Grassley and others and with Chairman Smith in the House to enact meaningful reform this year. This will be the first piece of legislation considered by the Judiciary Committee this year, and I hope the Senate will act promptly on this job-creating bill. Action by Congress can no longer be delayed.”

“The United States is the most innovative country in the world,” said Grassley. “An efficient patent system is a necessary component to continuing and enhancing this job creating ingenuity and entrepreneurship. I look forward to working with Chairman Leahy and Senator Hatch to move this important legislation forward.”

The Patent Reform Act makes changes to first-window post-grant review, inter partes review, willfulness, interlocutory appeals, Patent and Trademark Office funding, and supplemental examinations. The legislation will also transition the nation's patent system to a first-inventor-to-file system and will provide certainty in damages calculations. The legislation will also include important provisions to improve patent quality.

The compromise legislation on which the patent Reform Act of 2011 is based enjoyed widespread support from companies representing all sectors of the patent community who have been urging action on patent reform proposals for years. It mirrors key improvements to the

long-pending legislation that were announced last March as part of a compromise with then-Judiciary Committee Ranking Member Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.), Sen. John Kyl (R-Ariz.) and others.

The Judiciary Committee has worked to advance patent reform legislation since 2006. Leahy is the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and has included the Patent Reform Act of 2011 on the Committee's first executive business meeting agenda. Hatch is the Committee's senior Republican member and a former Chairman, and Grassley is the panel's incoming Ranking Republican.