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HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE TO HOLD HEARINGS ON PATENT LAW REFORM

WASHINGTON, D. C. -- Improving the productivity of the American economy through reforms in the patent system will be the focus of hearings beginning next week by the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties, and the Administration of Justice.

Subcommittee Chairman Congressman Bob Kastenmeier (D-Wis.) announced that the Subcommittee will consider a series of recommendations made by President Carter on improving industrial innovation. The Secretary of Commerce, Philip M. Klutznick, will be the lead-off witness before the Subcommittee on Thursday, April 3, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 2226 of the Rayburn House Office Building.

"With the annual inflation rate approaching 20 percent, it is imperative that we improve the productivity of our economy," Kastenmeier said. "These hearings will examine ways of developing more usable technology out of our research dollars."

Specific bills to be considered at the hearings propose the following:

1. Establishing a uniform policy on ownership of patent rights flowing out of government-funded research.

2. Providing incentives for the commercialization of patented technology developed by universities and small businesses pursuant to government contracts.

3. Permitting the patent office to re-examine issued patents of doubtful validity.

4. Establishing a new court for patent appeals.

5. Creating a new fee structure for the patent office.

6. Providing protection against copying computer programs.

Kastenmeier noted that this will be the first of five days of hearings the Subcommittee will hold on patent reform during the month of April.

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