20 House Report No. 96-1307, 96th Cong., 2d Sess. (1980) *

[Part 1]

AMENDING THE PATENT AND TRADEMARK LAWS

September 9, 1980--Ordered to be printed

Mr. Kastenmeier, from the Committee on the Judiciary, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 6933]

[Including cost estimate and comparison of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on the Judiciary to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 6933) entitled: "To amend the patent and trademark laws", having considered the same, report favorably thereon with amendments and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment to the text of the bill is a complete substitute therefor and appears in italic type in the reported bill.

The title of the bill is amended to reflect the amendment to the text of the bill.

STATEMENT

The Need for the Legislation

Many analysts of the U.S. economy have warned that the roots of the current recession lie in a longer term economic malaise which arises out of a failure of American industry to keep pace with the increased productivity of foreign competitors.n1

According to the Committee for Economic Development, "the slowing of productivity improvement during the past few years parallels the discouraging decline in the rate of investment in plant and equipment."n2 The rate of investment as a proportion of GNP has averaged about one half the rate for France and Germany and about one third the rate for Japan. Further, the situation does not appear to be improving. There has been an especially significant decline in total U.S. expenditures for research and development, as measured in constant dollars since 1970.n3 Since the primary means of improving productivity lies in the creation of new technologies, the decline in expenditures for research and development is especially significant to the health of the overall economy.

Testimony presented to the Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties and the Administration of Justice also indicates that the Federal Government is bearing an ever increasing share of the burden of financing basic research and development.n4 This means that the effective commercialization of government financed research is becoming an ever more important issue for those who are concerned with industrial innovation. The patent policies governing the utilization of government funded research will become even more important when the research expected to flow out of recent Congressional enactments such as the Energy Security Act of 1980n5 begins to produce usable new technologies. It is highly likely that the fuel which powers our automobiles and the boilers which heat our homes will owe part of their chemical composition or mechanical operation to patented research developed in part by government funds. At the present time U.S. companies desiring to use government funded research to develop new products and processes must confront a bewildering array of 26 different sets of agency regulations governing their rights to use such research. This bureaucratic confusion discourages efficient use of taxpayer financed research and development.

HISTORY OF THE BILL

The crisis in U.S. productivity and the governmental role in it has not gone unnoticed, however. In May of 1978 the President called for a major policy review of industrial innovation as the key to increased productivity in the United States. This White House call to action resulted in the creation of an advisory Committee of more than 150 senior representatives from the industrial, public interest, labor, scientific, and academic communities. The work of the Advisory Committee was overseen by a cabinet level coordinating committee chaired by the Secretary of Commerce. The Committee studied all the areas in which federal government policy impacts on productivity and innovation in the private sector. These fields of inquiry included: economic and trade policy; environmental, health and safety regulations; anti-trust enforcement; federal procurement policies, and federal patent and information policies.

When the advisory committee issued its 300 page report last year, a key segment contained recommendations on government patent policy. These recommendations, in turn, were received by the President, and formed the basis of a major legislative proposal which was conveyed to the Congress. Special emphasis was placed on the role of the patent system and the patent policy regarding government funded research in promoting industrial innovation. These patent related recommendations were forwarded to the Committee on the Judiciary and are embodied in H.R. 6933 and H.R. 3806.

H.R. 6933 has three major thrusts. First, it strengthens investor confidence in the certainty of patent rights by creating a system of administrative reexamination of doubtful patents. Secondly, it strengthens the financial resources of the Patent Office to provide fast and accurate processing of patent applications by revising the fee structure of the Office. Finally, the existing melange of 26 different agency policies on vesting of patent rights in government funded research is replaced by a single, uniform national policy designed to cut down on bureaucracy and encourage private industry to utilize government funded inventions through the commitment of the risk capital necessary to develop such inventions to the point of commercial application.

H.R. 3806 embodies another recommendation of the Advisory Committee and the President. It grants jurisdiction over appeals in patent cases to a single court of appeals--ending the current legal confusion created by 11 different appellate forums, all generating different interpretations of the patent law. The new court will do a great deal to improve investors' confidence in patented technology.

In addition to the three broad areas already outlined, H.R. 6933 addresses the special needs of Universities and small businesses when they attempt to deal with Patent issues arising out of government contracts. Both of these groups lack the resources to cope with the bewildering regulatory and bureaucratic problems associated with transfer of patent rights pursuant to government contracts; and the university sector in particular is an important link to the private sector.

The Subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties and the Administration of Justice held seven days of hearings on H.R. 6933 and related patent law proposals. In all, over thirty witnesses from Government, the private Bar, industry, education, small business, and the judiciary offered testimony on the various legislative proposals before the subcommittee. Hearings were followed by four days of markup, during which H.R. 3806, creating a new Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, H.R. 6933, containing reforms in patent policy and procedures, and H.R. 6934, clarifying the law of copyright of computer programs, were reported favorably. Each bill was reported unanimously. The unanimous votes, particularly on H.R. 6933, were cast only after careful examination of the legislation in light of the criticisms made during the hearings and after consultation with members of the Committee on Science and Technology, which shares jurisdictional interest. During the course of markup H.R. 6933 was amended substantially to respond to criticisms raised during the hearing.

SUMMARY OF THE BILL

H.R. 6933, as amended, addresses four major issues. Section 1 provides for a system of administrative reexamination of patents within the patent office. This new procedure will permit any party to petition the patent office to review the efficacy of a patent, subsequent to its issuance, on the basis of new information about preexisting technology which may have escaped review at the time of the initial examination of the patent application. Reexamination will permit efficient resolution of questions about the validity of issued patents without recourse to expensive and lengthy infringement litigation. This, in turn, will promote industrial innovation by assuring the kind of certainty about patent validity which is a necessary ingredient of sound investment decisions.

The cost incurred in defensive patent litigation sometimes reaches $ 250,000 for each party, an impossible burden for many smaller firms. The result is a chilling effect on those businesses and independent inventors who have repeatedly demonstrated their ability to successfully innovate and develop new products. A new patent reexamination procedure is needed to permit the owner of a patent to have the validity of his patent tested in the Patent office where

the most expert opinions exist and at a much reduced cost. Patent office reexamination will greatly reduce, if not end, the threat of legal costs being used to "blackmail" such holders into allowing patent infringements or being forced to license their patents for nominal fees.

The reexamination of issued patents could be conducted with a fraction of the time and cost of formal legal proceedings and would help restore confidence in the effectiveness of our patent system.

The bill does not provide for a stay of court proceedings. It is believed by the committee that stay provisions are unnecessary in that such power already resides with the Court to prevent costly pretrial maneuvering which attempts to circumvent the reexamination procedure. It is anticipated that these measures provide a useful and necessary alternative for challengers and for patent owners to test the validity of United States patents in an efficient and relatively inexpensive manner.

Sections 2 through 5 of H.R. 6933 provide for a new fee structure for the patent office. At the present time patent examination fees are established by statute, last revised in 1967. When enacted, the present fee structure provided revenues which met 67 percent of the costs of operating the Patent Office. Inflation has now reduced the impact of those fees to the point where they generate only 27 percent of the funding necessary to the operation of the office.

At the present time patent fees average about $ 239 per application.n6

H.R. 6933 would entirely revise the fee structure. It grants the Commissioner the power to establish fees. As introduced, the bill provided that the fee level would be revised yearly to generate 60 percent of the revenue needed to operate the office. However, the subcommittee amended the bill to reduce that level to 50 percent. This was in response particularly to criticism from small business and individual inventors that the fees would place too great a burden on those groups.

In order to further soften the impact on small business and individual inventors, the fees are to be paid in four installments over the life of the patent. This system, known as maintenance fees, is in use in most advanced industrial nations and has the advantage of deferring payment until the invention begins to return revenue to the inventor.

Should the invention prove to have no commercial value, the inventor has the option of permitting the patent to lapse, thus avoiding all further fees.

Section 6 of H.R. 6933 provides for a uniform policy governing the disposition of patent rights in government funded research.

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SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Reexamination

Section 1 of the bill would add seven new sections to the patent laws to establish a patent reexamination system. These seven new sections would constitute chapter 30 of title 35 of the United States Code.

Section 301. Citation of prior art

Section 301 provides statutory authority for the citation to the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) of prior art consisting of patents or printed publications which a person believes to have a bearing on the patentability of any claim of a particular patent. Section 301 would make clear that a citation of prior art is not to be included in the official file on a patent unless the citer submits a written statement as to the pertinency and applicability to the patent. Section 301 also would require the PTO to keep the identity of the citer of prior art confidential if the citer so requests in writing. Without the confidentiality provision, competitors of a patent owner might be reluctant to cite prior art to the PTO.

Section 302. Request for reexamination

Section 302 provides authority for any person to seek reexamination by the PTO on the basis of the patents and printed publications cited under section 301. Such a person need not be the one who cited prior art under section 301. The person could even be the patentee.

Section 302 requires that the person seeking reexamination pay a fee established by the Secretary. Under section 2 of this bill, the Secretary would be required to establish a fee to recover the estimated average cost of a reexamination proceeding. Thus, those who request reexamination would pay for it.

Section 302 requires the Commissioner to send a copy of the request promptly to the patent owner, as shown by the records of the Office. The patent owner would have to see that his ownership and current address are recorded properly so that the request is not sent to a previous owner.

Section 303. Determination of issue by Commissioner

Subsection 303(a) requires the Commissioner to determine if a "substantial new question of patentability" is raised in connection with any claims of the patent against which a patent or printed publication is cited and to order reexamination upon a positive determination. Further, it would permit the Commissioner to initiate reexamination without a request upon a determination that a substantial new question of patentability is raised by patents or publications discovered by him or cited under the provisions of section 301. This authority to initiate reexamination without a request is not intended to abrogate in any way the right of the United States to sue to cancel a patent obtained by fraudulent means.

This "substantial new question" requirement would protect patentees from having to respond to, or participate in unjustified reexaminations. Further, it would act to bar reconsideration of any argument already decided by the Office, whether during the original examination or an earlier reexamination.

Subsection 303(b) requires that the Commissioner's determination be recorded in the file of the patent and a copy promptly sent to the patent owner and the person requesting the reexamination.

Subsection 303(c) makes final and nonappealable a decision by the Commissioner not to conduct reexamination. In such a case, however, a portion of the reexamination fee could be returned.

No one would be deprived of any legal right by a denial by the Commissioner of a request for reexamination. A party to a reexamination proceeding could still argue in any subsequent litigation that the PTO erred and that the patent is invalid on the basis of the cited prior art.

Section 304. Reexamination order by Commissioner

Section 304 specifies the initial steps to be taken where the Commissioner determines that reexamination should be ordered. Upon issuance of a determination ordering reexamination, the patent owner would be given the opportunity to file a statement with the Office and, if he wishes, to propose an amendment to the specification or claims of his patent as well as a new claim or claims in response to the Commissioner's determination. The patent owner would be required to serve a copy of any such statement and any proposed amendment on the person requesting reexamination, who would be permitted to file a reply with the Office, with service required on the patent owner.

Section 305. Conduct of reexamination proceedings

Section 305 governs the conduct of the actual reexamination proceeding. Section 305 specifies that after the initial exchange permitted under section 304, the PTO will utilize the same procedures it uses for the initial examination of patent applications under patent law sections 132 and 133 . The patent owner could propose an amendment to his patent specification or claims, as well as propose a new claim or claims, to distinguish his invention from the prior art cited under section 301. However, the bill would prohibit the Commissioner from granting during reexamination any amended or new claim that enlarges the scope of a claim of the original patent. Also, the bill would require reexamination to be promptly handled, so as to make it as helpful as possible.

Section 306. Appeal

Section 306 grants a patent owner the right to pursue the same appeal routes available to patent applicants. An adverse decision on reexamination by the primary examiner could be appealed to the Board of Appeals. Adverse final decisions on reexamination by the Board of Appeals or by the Commissioner could be appealed to the U.S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals or de novo review of the reexamination decision could be sought in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia.

Section 307. Certificate of patentability, unpatentability, and claim cancellation

Section 307(a) requires the Commissioner at the conclusion of reexamination to cancel any patent claim found to be unpatentable, confirm any patent claim found to be patentable, and add any amended or new claims found to be patentable.

Subsection 307(b) provides intervening rights similar to those provided by patent law section 252 with respect to reissued patents. Thus, a person practicing a patented invention would not be considered an infringer for the period between issuance of an invalid patent and its conversion through reexamination to a valid patent.

It ordinarily is in the interests of both parties to expedite the disposition of patent litigation. A party discovering new prior art on which reexamination might be conducted ordinarily will reveal it promptly to the patent owner. If he does not, the court may exercise its equity power by allowing the patent owner to request reexamination later in the trial, or precluding the party from relying on such prior art or by other appropriate measures.

Administrative Fee Setting

Section 2 of the bill would restructure and modernize completely section 41 of title 35, United States Code--the basic fee provision of the patent laws.

The committee recognizes that the PTO, in issuing patents and registering trademarks, performs a significant public service in implementing the Federal patent and trademark laws and also confers benefit on private persons who seek to protect their intellectual property. The Committee, therefore, supports the premise that patent applicants and those seeking to register trademarks should bear a significant share of the cost of operating the PTO by the payment of fees. However, the Committee has made certain amendments to the formula which empowers the Commissioner to set these fees. Certain costs of operating the PTO confer no direct benefit on applicants but rather go to meet the responsibility of the Federal Government to have a PTO in order to execute the law. For example, the cost of executive direction and administration of the office, including the Office of the Commissioner and certain agency offices involved with public information, legislation, international affairs and technology assessment. Maintaining the public search room confers a general public benefit, as does the maintenance of the patent files in depository libraries. The contribution to the World Intellectual Property Organization relative to the Patent Cooperation Treaty is a treaty obligation. These costs should be paid for entirely from appropriated funds.

The committee inserted the word "actual" in this legislation to describe those costs which should be assumed 50 percent by applicants. Patent applicants should bear through the payment of fees, 25 percent in processing of fees, and 25 percent in maintenance fees, the costs of the patent examiners and their clerical support, as well as quality review, appeals, interferences, and patent printing including internal PTO printing costs. Also, "actual" is intended to exclude from such costs the acquisition or replacement of equipment where such acquisition or replacement involves substantial capital outlays. Such expenditures would be paid from the Patent and Trademark Office's appropriation. The cost of data and document retrieval systems, however, to the extent that these expenditures goes toward the reclassification of the patent search file, should be borne 50 percent by the public. These are the actual costs of processing patent applications, and activity which confers certain direct benefits on private persons.

The committee notes that the PTO furnishes to the public copies of issued patents for a fee. The costs to the PTO of such copies should be charged to applicants.

The trademark examiners and their clerical support, the trial and appeal process, and trademark printing should be paid for to the extent of 50 percent by applicants for the registration of trademarks.

Some of the cost of operating the PTO confers no direct benefit to the general public, but rather goes to providing services to private parties. The cost of customer services such as providing copies should be recovered 100 percent in fees. Also, in the patent process, drafting and assignment should be self-supporting.

Illustrative Example of PTO Recovery Policy--Based on Fiscal
Year 1981 Budget

I. Government 100 percent: Commissioner (includes Office of Information Services); Office of Legislation and International Affairs; Management planning; Administrative services; Automatic data processing; and Search room.

II. Government 50 percent/users 50 percent: Examination--professional staff; Quality review; Clerical force; Appeals; Interferences; Patent printing; Solicitor; Data and document retrieval; publication services; Examination of trademarks; Trademark trial and appeals; and Trademark printing.

III. Users 100 percent: Customer services; drafting; and assignment.

Section 41. Patent fees

Subsection 41(a) authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to set fees administratively for processing a patent application, for maintaining a patent in force, and for providing all other patent services and materials.

Subsection 41(b) requires the Secretary of Commerce to establish fees for processing patent applications, from filing to disposition by issuance or abandonment, equal in aggregate to 25 percent of the estimated average cost of actually processing an application. As fee revenues and costs change, the Secretary would adjust fees to achieve the specified recovery rate once every three years. These fees are those of the type now specified in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 6 of existing subsection 41(a) of the patent laws. The Secretary would have authority to eliminate or change the amounts of any of the present fees and establish others, so long as a fee charged directly relates to the actual processing of patent applications and the aggregate fees for an application effect the specified 25 percent recovery rate.

Subsection 41(b) would treat design patent processing fees differently than fees for other types of patents. Since the costs to the Office of processing design patent applications are significantly lower and maintenance fees will not be imposed, design patent applicants would be charged fees equal in aggregate to 50 percent of the estimated cost of processing such an application.

Subsection 41(c) requires the payment of maintenance fees three times in a patent's life--six months prior to the fourth, eighth and twelfth anniversaries of the patent's seventeen-year term. As required by the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, subsection 41(c) permits late payment during a six-month grace period. Failure to pay an applicable maintenance fee by the end of the grace period would result in expiration of the patent on the date the grace period ends.

Subsection 41(c) also requires the Secretary to establish maintenance fees at levels that recover 30 percent of the costs to the Office for the year in which such maintenance fees are received of processing all applications for patents other than design patents, from filing through disposition by issuance or abandonment, by the fifteenth year following enactment of the Act.

Subsection 41(d) requires the Secretary to establish fees for all other patent-related services and materials at levels which will recover the full costs to the Office of performing those services or providing those materials. Fees would be adjusted as costs vary. Subsection 41(d), however, would maintain the existing subsection 41(a)(9) fee of $ 50 for providing a despository library with uncertified printed copies of the specifications and drawings for all patents issued in a year.

Subsection 41(e) allows the Commissioner to waive any fee for a service or product provided to a government agency. This authority now is provided in existing subsection 41(c).

Subsection 41(f) limits the adjustment of patent application processing fees and maintenance fees to once every three years.

Subsection 41(g) imposes a notice requirement on effective date of new or adjusted fees.

Crediting of Fee Revenue to the PTO Appropriation Account

Section 3 of this bill would amend section 41 of title 35, United States Code, by completely rewriting it.

Section 42. Patent and Trademark Office funding

Subsection 42(a) makes all fees for Patent and Trademark Office services and materials payable to the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks. This provision is carried over from existing section 42.

Subsection 42(b) requires all fee revenues and all Patent and Trademark Office appropriations to be credited to the Patent and Trademark Office Appropriation Account in the Treasury of the United States. At present, Patent and Trademark Office fee revenues are deposited in the general fund of the Treasury and are unavailable for directly funding PTO activities.

Subsection 42(c) makes fee revenues credited to the PTO Appropriation Account available to the Secretary of Commerce to carry out the activities of the Patent and Trademark Office. Budgetary control is maintained since the PTO would continue to receive appropriations and the use of fee revenues would be limited "to the extent provided for in an appropriations Acts."

Subsection 42(d) authorizes the Secretary to refund any fee paid by mistake or any account paid in excess of that required. This authority is found in existing section 42.

Technical Amendment

Section 4 of the bill is a technical amendment to section 154 of the patent laws necessitated by creation of the maintenance fee system.

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Transitional Provisions

Section 8. Effective date

Section 8 provides for the taking effect of the bill's various provisions.

Section 8(a) specified and that the fee setting authority provisions of the bill and the conforming technical amendment take effect upon enactment. Nevertheless, these fees need not be set to recover the levels specified in the bill (25 percent recovery for patent processing and full recovery for providing materials and services in patent and trademark cases) until the first day of the first fiscal year beginning one calendar year after enactment. This will provide at least a year to determine the amounts and natures of fees needed.

Subsection 8(b) provides that the reexamination provisions of this bill take effect six months after enactment and apply to patents then in force or issued thereafter.

Subsection 8(c) provides that the authority to credit fee revenues to the Office's Appropriation Account take effect as of the first day of the first fiscal year beginning one calendar year after enactment. Thus, at least one year would be available to obtain needed administrative approval and implement an appropriate accounting system. However, until section 3 takes effect, the Secretary, in order to pay reexamination costs, may credit the Patent and Trademark Office Appropriation Account with the revenues from collected reexamination fees.

Subsection 8(d) continues existing fees until new fees are established.

Subsection 8(e) provides that maintenance fees shall not be applicable to patents applied for prior to the day of enactment of this Act.

Subsection 8(f) provides that sections 6 and 7 of this bill which establish a uniform patent policy and make necessary conforming amendments to existing laws take effect six months after enactment.

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Estimated Cost of the Legislation

It is estimated that there will be no additional costs to the United States due to the provisions of H.R. 6933. As the statement of the Congressional Budget Office indicates, there will be a substantial savings to the United States as a result of the legislation.

Statement of the Congressional Budget Office

Click here to view image.

Dear Mr. Chairman: Pursuant to Section 403 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 , the Congressional Budget Office has prepared the attached cost estimate for H.R. 6933, a bill to amend the patent and trademark laws.

Should the Committee so desire, we would be pleased to provide further details on this estimate.

Sincerely, James Blum
(For Alice M. Rivlin, Director).

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE--COST ESTIMATE, AUGUST 28, 1980

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Reexamination of patents

H.R. 6933 would allow any party to petition the PTO to reexamine a patent for validity. The cost of reexamination would be paid by the party based on a fee structure established by the Commissioner of Patents. It is anticipated that the number of patent applications for reexaminations will be limited by the cost involved and the potential for commercial

development. Based on rates currently available in foreign countries for similar procedures, as well as estimates provided by the PTO, it is estimated that the number of appeals will be approximately 500 in fiscal year 1981, increasing to 2,000 by 1982, and remain relatively stable thereafter.

Although the bill does not specifically authorize funding for this purpose, it is assumed that additional staff will be required to handle the reexamination procedures. Based on PTO data, it is estimated that the average cost per employee, including overhead and benefits, would be approximately $ 40,000 in fiscal year 1981. Assuming approximately 30 hours per reexamination, plus clerical support, it is estimated that approximately 55 appeals could be reviewed annually by a professional staff member. It is estimated that the cost of this procedure would be approximately $ 0.4 million in fiscal year 1981, which reflects six month's activity. Costs are estimated to be $ 1.4 million in fiscal year 1982, increasing to $ 2.5 million by fiscal year 1985. It is assumed, however, that the full amount required by the PTO for salaries and expenses would be recovered by fees set at the beginning of the fiscal year and adjusted annually for inflation and anticipated workload. It is assumed that fees would be included with the request for reexamination and reflected as a reimbursable to the agency, resulting in a net outlay of around zero in each fiscal year.

Revision of fee structure

H.R. 6933 would restructure the current fee structure for patents and trademarks. Currently, the PTO recovers approximately 20 percent of the cost of processing patents and approximately 30 percent of the cost of issuing trademarks. These fees are deposited in the general fund of the Treasury.

The bill would allow the PTO to recover up to 25 percent of the average processing costs and 25 percent of the maintenance costs for patents, the latter fee collected in four installments over the life of the patent. In addition, the PTO would be allowed to recover a maximum of 50 percent of the cost of issuing trademarks. All fees for patents and trademarks could be adjusted no more than once every three years and would be credited to the PTO as a reimbursable to the agency, rather than as a revenue to the Treasury.

It is assumed that the revised fee structure for trademarks would be implemented early in the second quarter of fiscal year 1981, and for patents beginning in fiscal year 1982. It is assumed that the agency costs for processing patents and trademarks from which recovery could be made would be approximately $ 84 million in fiscal year 1982, increasing to approximately $ 109 million by fiscal year 1985. It is assumed that an average recovery rate of 25 and 50 percent, adjusted every third year, would be established for processing fees for patents and for trademarks, respectively. Patent maintenance fees would be collected three times in a patent's life--around the forth, eighth, and twelfth year. Since the first payment would not be made until fiscal year 1986, it is not reflected in the table below.

[By fiscal years, in millions of dollars]

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Committee Vote

H.R. 6933 was approved by the Committee on the Judiciary on August 20, 1980, by a voice vote.

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CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3 of Rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in italics, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

TITLE 35, UNITED STATES CODE

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PART I--PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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CHAPTER 4--PATENT FEES

Sec.

41. Patent fees.

42. Payment of patent fees; return of excess amounts.

[§ 41. Patent fees

[(a) The Commissioner shall charge the following fees:

[1. On filing each application for an original patent, except in design cases, $ 65; in addition on filing or on presentation at any other time, $ 10 for each claim in independent form which is in excess of one, and $ 2, for each claim (whether independent or dependent) which is in excess of ten. For the purpose of computing fees, a multiple dependent claim as referred to in section 112 of this title or any claim depending therefrom shall be considered as separate dependent claims in accordance with the number of claims to which reference is made. Errors in payment of the additional fees may be rectified in accordance with regulations of the Commissioner.

[2. For issuing each original or reissue patent, except in design cases, $ 100; in addition, $ 10 for each page (or portion thereof) of specification as printed, and $ 2 for each sheet of drawing.

[3. In design cases:

[a. On filing each design application, $ 20.

[b. On issuing each design patent: For three years and six months, $ 10; for seven years, $ 20; and for fourteen years, $ 30.

[4. On filing each application for the reissue of a patent, $ 65; in addition, on filing or on presentation at any other time, $ 10 for each claim in independent form which is in excess of the number of independent claims of the original patent, and $ 2 for each claim (whether independent or dependent) which is in excess of ten and also in excess of the number of claims of the original patent. Errors in payment of the additional fees may be rectified in accordance with regulations of the Commissioner.

[5. On filing each disclaimer, $ 15.

[6. On appeal for the first time from the examiner to the Board of Appeals, $ 50; in addition, on filing a brief in support of the appeal, $ 50.

[7. On filing each petition for the revival of an abandoned application for a patent or for the delayed payment of the fee for issuing each patent, $ 15.

[8. For certificate under section 255 or under section 256 of this title, $ 15.

[9. As available and if in print: For uncertified printed copies of specifications and drawings of patents (except design patents), 50 cents per copy; for design patents, 20 cents per copy; the Commissioner may establish a charge not to exceed $ 1 per copy for patents in excess of twenty-five pages of drawings and specifications and for plant patents printed in color; special rates for libraries specified in section 13 of this title, $ 50 for patents issued in one year. The Commissioner may, without charge, provide applicants with copies of specifications and drawings of patents when referred to in a notice under section 132.

[10. For recording every assignment, agreement, or other paper relating to the property in a patent or application, $ 20; where the document relates to more than one patent or application, $ 3 for each additional item.

[11. For each certificate, $ 1.

[(b) The Commissioner may establish charges for copies of records, publications, or services furnished by the Patent and Trademark Office, not specified above.

[(c) The fees prescribed by or under this section shall apply to any other Government department or agency, or officer thereof, except that the Commissioner may waive the payment of any fee for services or materials in cases of occasional or incidental requests by a Government department or agency, or officer thereof.]

§ 41. Patent fees

(*a*) *The Commissioner of Patents will establish fees for the processing of an application for a patent, from filing through disposition by issuance or abandonment, for maintaining a patent in force, and for providing all other services and materials related to patents. No fee will be established for maintaining a design patent in force.*

(*b*) *By the first day of the first fiscal year beginning on or after one calendar year after enactment of this Act, fees for the actual processing of an application for a patent, other than for a design patent, from filing through disposition by issuance or abandonment, will recover in aggregate 25 per centum of the estimated average cost to the Office of such processing. By the first day of the first fiscal year beginning on or after one calendar year after enactment, fees for the processing of an application for a design patent, from filing through disposition by issuance or abandonment, will recover in aggregate 50 per centum of the estimated average cost to the Office of such processing.*

(*c*) *By the fifteenth fiscal year following the date of enactment of this Act, fees for maintaining patents in force will recover 25 per centum of the estimated cost to the Office, for the year in which such maintenance fees are received, of the actual processing all applications for patents, other than for design patents, from filing through disposition by issuance or abandonment. Fees for maintaining a patent in force will be due three years and six months, seven years and six months, and eleven years and six months after the grant of the patent. Unless payment of the applicable maintenance fee is received in the Patent and Trademark Office on or before the date the fee is due or within a grace period of six months thereafter, the patent will expire as of the end of such grace period. The Commissioner may require the payment of a surcharge as a condition of accepting within such six-month grace period the late payment of an applicable maintenance fee.*

(*d*) *By the first day of the first fiscal year beginning on or after one calendar year after enactment, fees for all other services or materials related to patents will recover the estimated average cost to the Office of performing the service or furnishing the material. The yearly fee for providing a library specified in section 13 of this title with uncertified printed copies of the specifications and drawings for all patents issued in that year will be $ 50.*

(*e*) *The Commissioner may waive the payment of any fee for any service or material related to patents in connection with an occasional or incidental request made by a department or agency of the Government, or any officer thereof. The Commissioner may provide any applicant issued a notice under section 132 of this title with a copy of the specifications and drawings for all patents referred to in that notice without charge.*

(*f*) *Fees will be adjusted by the Commissioner to achieve the levels of recovery specified in this section; however, no patent application processing fee or fee for maintaining a patent in force will be adjusted more than once every three years.*

(*g*) *No fee established by the Commissioner under this section will take effect prior to sixty days following notice in the Federal Register.*

[§ 42. Payment of patent fees; return of excess amounts

[All patent fees shall be paid to the Commissioner who, except as provided in sections 361(b) and 376(b) of this title, shall deposit the same in the Treasury of the United States in such manner as the Secretary of the Treasury directs, and the Commissioner may refund any sum paid by mistake or in excess of the fee required by law.]§ 42. Patent and Trademark Office funding

(*a*) *All fees for services performed by or materials furnished by the Patent and Trademark Office will be payable to the Commissioner.*

(*b*) *All fees paid to the Commissioner and all appropriations for defraying the costs of the activities of the Patent and Trademark Office will be credited to the Patent and Trademark Office Appropriation Account in the Treasury of the United States, the provisions of section 725e of title 31, United States Code, notwithstanding.*

(*c*) *Revenues from fees will be available to the Commissioner of Patents to carry out, to the extent provided for in appropriation Acts, the activities of the Patent and Trademark Office.*

(*d*) *The Commissioner may refund any fee paid by mistake or any amount paid in excess of that required.*

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PART II--PATENTABILITY OF INVENTIONS AND
GRANT OF PATENTS

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CHAPTER 14--ISSUE OF PATENT

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§ 154. Contents and term of patent

Every patent shall contain a short title of the invention and a grant to the patentee, his heirs or assigns, for the term of seventeen years, subject to the payment of [issue] fees as provided for in this title, of the right to exclude others from making, using, or selling the invention throughout the United States, referring to the specification for the particulars thereof. A copy of the specification and drawings shall be annexed to the patent and be a part thereof.

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CHAPTER 30--PRIOR ART CITATIONS TO OFFICE AND REEXAMINATION OF PATENTS

Sec. 301. 301. Citation of prior art.

Sec. 302. Request for reexamination.

Sec. 303. Determination of issue by Commissioner.

Sec. 304. Reexamination order by Commissioner.

Sec. 305. Conduct of reexamination proceedings.

Sec. 306. Appeal.

Sec. 307. Certificate of patentability, unpatentability, and claim cancellation.

§ 301. Citation of prior art.

Any person at any time may cite to the Office in writing prior art consisting of patents or printed publications which that person believes to have a bearing on the patentability of any claim of a particular patent. If the person explains in writing the pertinency and manner of applying such prior art to at least one claim of the patent, the citation of such prior art and the explanation thereof will become a part of the official file of the patent. At the written request of the person citing the prior art, his or her identity will be excluded from the patent file and kept confidential.

§ 302. Request for reexamination

Any person at any time may file a request for reexamination by the Office of any claim of a patent on the basis of any prior art cited under the provisions of section 301 of this title. The request must be in writing and must be accompanied by payment of a reexamination fee established by the Commissioner of Patents pursuant to the provisions of section 41 of this title. The request must set forth the pertinency and manner of applying cited prior art to every claim for which reexamination is requested. Unless the requesting person is the owner of the patent, the Commissioner promptly will send a copy of the request to the owner of record of the patent.

§ 303. Determination of issue by Commissioner

(*a*) *Within three months following the filing of a request for reexamination under the provisions of section 302 of this title, the Commissioner will determine whether a substantial new question of patentability affecting any claim of the patent concerned is raised by the request, with or without consideration of other patents or printed publications. On his own initiative, and at any time, the Commissioner may determine whether a substantial new question of patentability is raised by patents and publications discovered by him or cited under the provisions of section 301 of this title.*

(*b*) *A record of the Commissioner's determination under subsection (a) of this section will be placed in the official file of the patent, and a copy promptly will be given or mailed to the owner of record of the patent and to the person requesting reexamination, if any.*

(*c*) *A determination by the Commissioner pursuant to subsection (a) of this section that no substantial new question of patentability has been raised will be final and nonappealable. Upon such a determination, the Commissioner may refund a portion of the reexamination fee required under section 302 of this title.*

§ 304. Reexamination order by Commissioner

If, in a determination made under the provisions of subsection 303(a) of this title, the Commissioner finds that a substantial new question of patentability affecting any claim of a patent is raised, the determination will include an order for reexamination of the patent for resolution of the question. The patent owner will be given a reasonable period, not less than two months from the date a copy of the determination is given or mailed to him, within which he may file a statement on such question, including any amendment to his patent and new claim or claims he may wish to propose, for consideration in the reexamination. If the patent owner files such a statement, he promptly will serve a copy of it on the person who has requested reexamination under the provisions of section 302 of this title. Within a period of two months from the date of service, that person may file and have considered in the reexamination a reply to any statement filed by the patent owner. That person promptly will serve on the patent owner a copy of any reply filed.

§ 305. Conduct of reexamination proceedings

After the times for filing the statement and reply provided for by section 304 of this title have expired, reexamination will be conducted according to the procedures established for initial examination under the provisions of sections 132 and 133 of this title. In any reexamination proceeding under this chapter, the patent owner will be permitted to propose any amendment to his patent and a new claim or claims thereto, in order to distinguish the invention as claimed from the prior art cited under the provisions of section 301 of this title, or in response to a decision adverse to the patentability of a claim of a patent. No proposed amended or new claim enlarging the scope of a claim of the patent will be permitted in a reexamination proceeding under this chapter. All reexamination proceedings under this section, including any appeal to the Board of Appeals, will be conducted with special dispatch within the Office.

§ 306. Appeal

The patent owner involved in a reexamination proceeding under this chapter may appeal under the provisions of section 134 of this title, and may seek court review under the provisions of sections 141 to 145 of this title, with respect to any decision adverse to the patentability of any original or proposed amended or new claim of the patent.

§ 307. Certificate of patentability, unpatentability, and claim cancellation

(*a*) *In a reexamination proceeding under this chapter, when the time for appeal has expired or any appeal proceeding has terminated, the Commissioner will issue and publish a certificate canceling any claim of the patent finally determined to be unpatentable, confirming any claim of the patent determined to be patentable, and incorporating in the patent any proposed amended or new claim determined to be patentable.*

(*b*) *Any proposed amended or new claim determined to be patentable and incorporated into a patent following a reexamination proceeding will have the same effect as that specified in section 252 of this title for reissued patents on the right of any person who made, purchased, or used anything patented by such proposed amended or new claim, or who made substantial preparation for the same, prior to issuance of a certificate under the provisions of subsection* (*a*) *of this section.*

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[Part 2]

SEPTEMBER 23, 1980.--Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. Brooks, from the Committee on Government Operations, submitted the following

REPORT

together with

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

[To accompany H. R. 6933]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Government Operations, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 6933) entitled "To amend the patent and trademark laws," having considered the same, report favorably thereon with amendments and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

* * * * *

It was determined that Sections 1 through 5, dealing with certain procedures and fees, were not within the jurisdiction of the committee. The committee's jurisdiction does cover those sections dealing with Government policies for retaining or disposing of contract inventions developed during the course of or under Government contracts and related matters, and those sections dealing with the reorganization or transfer of individual units of Government.

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FOOTNOTES:

[n1] Footnote 1. Report of the President's Advisory Committee on Industrial Innovation, Sept., 1979.

[n2] Footnote 2. *Stimulating Technological Progress.* A statement by the Research and Policy Committee of the Committee for Economic Development, Jan. 1980, pp. 2-7.

[n3] Footnote 3. *Science Indicators,* National Science Board, 1976, pp. 108-115.

[n4] Footnote 4. Testimony of Pindaros Roy Vagelos, M.D., before the subcommittee on Courts, Civil Liberties and the Administration of Justice, April 15, 1980, transcript p. 14.

[n5] Footnote 5. P.L. 96-294 .

[n6] Footnote 6. Testimony of Honorable Sidney Diamond, Commissioner of Patents, April 24, 1980--p. 50.

*. The following is the text of those portions of the House Report by the Committee on the Judiciary (Part 1) and Committee on Government Operations (Part 2) relating to patent fees and patent reexamination. Those portions dealing with section 6 of H.R. 6933 and with other matters are omitted in view of the substantial amendments made to section 6 by the Senate.