

Questions Submitted for the Record from Subcommittee Ranking Member Roby
Lost Einsteins: Lack of Diversity in Patent Inventorship and the Impact on America's
Innovation Economy

Question for All Witnesses

1. What recommendations have you for the United States Patent & Trademark Office and the Small Business Administration to help promote the participation of women and minorities in entrepreneurship activities and the patent system?

Questions for Michelle K. Lee, Former Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

1. The U.S.P.T.O has at least three existing programs for helping inventors cost-effectively apply for patents. They are the Patent pro bono program, the Pro Se Assistance Program, and the Law School Clinic Program. Would expanding access to these programs provide an immediate solution to assist women and minority inventors who have an invention but lack the means to apply for a patent?
2. What suggestions do you have for the U.S.P.T.O. to make their inventor assistance programs more widely known so that more inventors are able to participate in the patent system?

Questions for Dr. Ayanna Howard, Professor and Chair, School of Interactive Computing, Georgia Institute of Technology

1. You testified that small business programs that provide funding to small businesses may prohibit the use of any of those funds to secure patent protection. Should the U.S.P.T.O. work with the Small Business Administration to identify which small business programs should be amended to allow inventors to use funds to secure patents?
2. At what stage in a company's development does the investment in securing a patent make the biggest difference to the growth and overall health of a new business?

Question for Lisa D. Cook, Associate Professor of Economics and International Relations, Michigan State University

1. I find it surprising that in its recent report on women and patenting, the U.S.P.T.O. found that gains in female participation in science and engineering occupations and entrepreneurship are not leading to broad increases in female patent inventors. Is promoting greater participation by girls and minorities in STEM education and by women and minorities in STEM careers at some point going to increase the number of

women and minorities filing patent applications, or is awareness of the patent system by these underrepresented groups the answer?

Question for Susie Armstrong, Senior Vice President, Engineering, Qualcomm, Inc.

1. Can you explain why it is beneficial to companies to ensure that all of their inventors are aware of the value of patents, both to the employees individually and to the overall health of their employer, so that companies consider filing patent applications on all valuable inventions conceived by their employees?