



July 13, 2015

Dear Members of Congress:

At a time when we need to be creating incentives for investment in innovative therapies, Congress is considering a patent reform bill that could make future advances in treating epilepsy and many other complex chronic conditions all too rare. A strong and secure patent system that encourages investments in innovative treatments and devices is critical for the millions of Americans waiting for breakthrough therapies and a cure to live their lives to their fullest potential. We urge you to support amendments to HR 9 that would ensure strong patents that sustain medical research.

The Epilepsy Foundation is one of more than 90 organizations that submitted a letter on May 21 to the House and Senate Judiciary Committees urging Congress to preserve patent protections as it considers comprehensive patent reform (to view the letter visit epilepsy.com/patentsforinnovation). The impact on unmet need for millions of Americans who are waiting for new treatments and a cure should be at the forefront of the patent reform debate going forward because it is not only about investors and inventors, but also about life-changing treatments and devices.

Developing new medical treatments can cost billions and take more than a decade. Patents play an indispensable role in fostering investments that bring new medicines and devices to market. Investors are willing to shoulder the considerable cost because patents assure them they will recoup their investment. But this arrangement only works with strong patent protections. The Innovation Act threatens to undermine patent protection by creating a host of new administrative hassles for those defending their patents in court, which could deter investors and researchers from pouring funds and years into the development of new therapies.

Lawmakers must rework the Innovation Act to avoid weakening the patents that sustain medical research. The Patent and Trademark Office's Inter Partes Review (IPR) process must be fixed to promote research and development in America and avoid a chilling effect on the therapy development pipeline. Strong patents will ensure that innovative ideas make it from the lab to the people who need them most. In an environment where research funding is hard to secure and results take years to achieve, we urge the House of Representatives to ensure that we can rely on the patent system to protect the promise of future medical breakthroughs and fuel American innovation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at aostrom@efa.org or 301-918-3766.

Thank you,

Angela Ostrom
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Epilepsy Foundation