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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE

LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES,

EDUCATION

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CONGRESSIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC
AMERICAN CAUCUS, CHAIR EMERITUS

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
COALITION, VICE CHAIR

LGBT EQUALITY CAUCUS,
VICE CHAIR

January 26, 2015

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230 United States Capitol

The Honorable Harry Reid
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221 United States Capitol

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Chairman
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Re: Michelle Lee nomination to USPTO

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Reid, Chairman Grassley, and Ranking Member Leahy:

I am writing to express my support for the nomination of Michelle Lee to the position of Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) and to request that you schedule a vote on her nomination as soon as possible.

Michelle was a popular choice when she was selected as the first Director of the USPTO's Silicon Valley office in November 2012. She has been actively involved in patent reform discussions for close to a decade, advising the USPTO on policies, goals, performance and operations during her service as a member of its Patent Public Advisory Committee (PPAC) and providing input during the implementation of the America Invents Act.

Prior to joining the Silicon Valley USPTO office, Michelle enjoyed a successful tenure at Google as Deputy General Counsel and Head of Patents and Patent Strategy. Under Michelle's leadership and strategic vision, Google's patent team flourished, growing from holding fewer than ten patents at the outset to having an impressive portfolio of over 10,500 patents. While at Google, she led efforts on two key issues that USPTO is facing today, patent assertion entities and the mobile phone patent wars, experience that would serve her well as director of USPTO.

I had the pleasure of working with Michelle on the opening and site selection for the permanent USPTO Silicon Valley office location, where she was an instrumental ally as we worked to find a creative solution to enable the permanent office to open in the face of budget sequestration, and

I have found her to be eminently qualified for the job of Director of USPTO. Her expertise in the field is unmatched, she is highly regarded by her colleagues, she has performed admirably as Acting Director, and she will expand USPTO's horizons by bringing gender and ethnic diversity and the perspective of Silicon Valley innovators and the AAPI community into the fold.

I believe Michelle's leadership skills and breadth of experience will make her an asset to the USPTO, and I ask you to please schedule a vote on her nomination as soon as possible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Michael M. Honda". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress