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The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative \_\_\_\_\_:

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) recently informed its trademark attorneys that a third of our staff will be laid off on September 30, 2002.

We understand that the PTO's decision to conduct a reduction in force (RIF) is based upon a perceived shortage of work and projection of low demand for trademark applications based on the belief in poor economic performance for the foreseeable future. While PTO's economic assumptions appear not to match the projections of the rest of the Administration, many additional significant factors exist that question the wisdom of this RIF.

PTO is under no budgetary pressure to reduce staff. The current year's budget provides adequate resources to avoid a RIF. For next year, the Administration's budget proposal does not even have the PTO spending all of the fees it collects. A temporary decline in the number of trademark applications would allow PTO to address many other serious concerns. Pendency on applications could be reduced, quality could be improved and new advances in E-commerce could be won.

I would note that the intellectual property community - the very applicants who are paying the fees which fund PTO - support these goals of reduced pendency, improved quality and advances in E-commerce rather than a RIF of trademark attorneys.

At a time when Congress has rightly raised concerns as to the human capital crisis in the federal service, this seems the wrong time for PTO to let go young, bright dedicated attorneys for a RIF that is based on questionable economic assumptions, opposed by the industry the agency services, and abandons the chance to make meaningful improvements in the application process.

I would appreciate any assistance your office could offer to request reconsideration of this planned RIF.

Sincerely,

[name & address]