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June 8, 2015

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte  
Chairman  
U.S. House Judiciary Committee  
2309 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Judiciary Committee  
2426 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Ranking Member Conyers:

On behalf of the 1.1 million members of the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), who facilitate nearly 5 million home sales, boosting the American economy, I write in support of H.R. 9, the Innovation Act. Litigation and threatened litigation from abusive patent trolls are diverting resources away from more productive activities, including property sales and investment in new technologies that enhance the consumer's real estate experience and lead to job creation.

NAR, whose members identify themselves as REALTORS®, represents a wide variety of real estate industry professionals. REALTORS® have been early adopters of technology and are industry innovators who understand that consumers today are seeking real estate information and services that are fast, convenient and comprehensive. Increasingly, technology innovations are driving the delivery of real estate services and the future of REALTORS® businesses.

In 2012, patent trolls sued more non-tech companies than tech companies at an estimated cost to the U.S. economy of \$80 billion spent on court battles. The number of defendants in patent lawsuits increased roughly 129 percent over the four year period from 2007-2011, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office. Real estate firms, brokers, independent agents, service providers, and building tenants have been threatened with spurious patent infringement claims, in contexts that include the following:

- Real estate sales professionals implementing website technology to allow zooming in to located points of interest on a map and creating home search alert function
- Building owners and tenants that use standard, off-the-shelf routers to provide Wi-Fi access for hotspots in lobbies, restaurants, atriums, and other common areas of buildings;
- The Multiple Listing Service, a critical tool for real estate agents that uses location-based search capabilities to identify homes and other properties available for sale or lease; and
- Businesses that attach scanned documents to emails to execute contracts, closings, and other commonplace real estate transactions.

Rather than researching and litigating abusive patent infringement claims, our members wish to channel their resources to serving their core functions to satisfy the real estate needs of the American people – and create jobs in the process. To that end, we urge the Judiciary Committee to approve H.R. 9.

NAR thanks you for this important work and looks forward to working with you enact legislation this year.

Sincerely,



Chris Polychron  
2015 President, National Association of REALTORS®

cc: U.S. House Judiciary Committee

