

To XXXXXXXX,

This week the full House is expected to consider H.R.3309, the Innovation Act, sponsored by Congressman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA). I and my fellow REALTORS® urge you to vote in favor of the bill when it is considered.

Each year, nearly one million REALTORS® across the U.S. contribute to roughly 5 million home sales, boosting America's economy and helping to secure the investments of countless Americans.

Increasingly, REALTORS® understand that their clients – both buyers and sellers – expect and demand reliable, mobile, and convenient access to information.

In order to meet these needs, REALTORS® embrace the use of technologies to facilitate the real estate transaction process, from adding user-friendly search functions to their Websites to embracing location-based mapping. By adopting these technologies and others, such as the scanner-copiers that allow the seamless flow of necessary paperwork, Realtors are better able to serve their clients.

Unfortunately, in using new technologies, REALTORS® have unknowingly exposed themselves to attacks, with patent trolls demanding licensing fees and threatening burdensome, frivolous litigation.

For example, one such major case –over map-based web searching– resulted in a multi-million dollar settlement. From large settlements to individual demand letters, patent trolls cause REALTORS® to divert resources away from job creation and investment in new technologies that enhance the real estate experience.

Most REALTORS® are entrepreneurs and small business owners, and help to create new jobs in our communities. I urge you to vote in favor of the Innovation Act so that the threat of patent trolls is mitigated in the future, allowing us to return to our essential mission: to serve our clients.