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Patent Reforms Fall Short Of What State Firms Need

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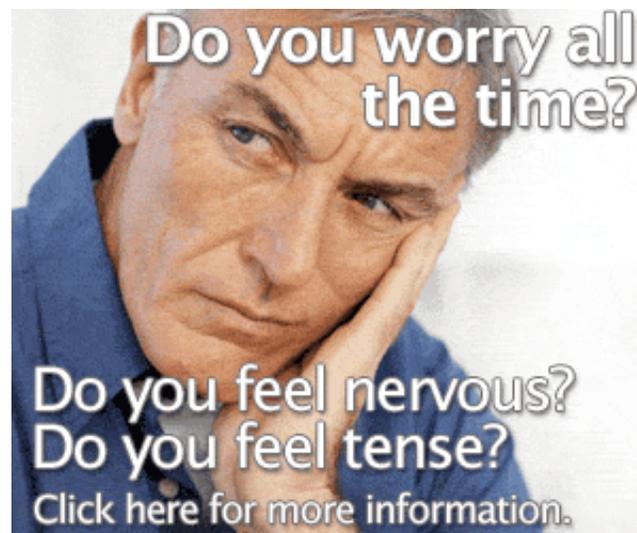
Our companies have much in common: Boehringer Ingelheim and Pfizer discover, develop, manufacture and market biotechnology and pharmaceutical products that treat conditions such as heart disease, HIV/AIDS and arthritis.

We also share certain elements that are critical to success: a strong workforce; a commitment to innovation, research and development; and dependable patents covering our novel technologies.

Unfortunately, the reliability of our patents is threatened by federal legislation that is under consideration in the House and the Senate. Called The Patent Reform Act of 2007, this legislation makes important beneficial changes that would further align U.S. patent laws with the rules that apply in major jurisdictions outside the country. Unfortunately, it also includes provisions that would limit the value of patents, and it does not include useful reforms that were recommended by the National Academies, advisers to the nation on science, engineering and medicine.

For example, the legislation would limit the damages assessed on companies that are found to violate patents. This provides a financial incentive for infringement, and it does not repeal or substantially reform subjective elements in patent litigation as recommended by the National Academies.

Our businesses depend on the promise of reliable patent protection. We dedicate vast resources - in terms of hours and dollars - to research. After all, our competitiveness



relies on the ability to develop and market innovative therapeutic products. Strong patent protection is a necessary incentive to encourage this level of investment.

This may not initially seem to be very important to the people of Connecticut, but the impact of this would be clear in the long run: research-driven companies like Boehringer Ingelheim and Pfizer would suffer financially without effective patent protection.

Our companies have thrived on the strength of the workforce in Connecticut. From research to sales to production, Boehringer Ingelheim and Pfizer employ roughly 10,000 people in the state.

What's more, we are only two of the countless research-driven companies in Connecticut that would be handicapped if the patent reform legislation were passed in its current form. From start-ups to large, established firms, the impact of this wayward piece of legislation would be felt across the state.

Further, Connecticut is the home not only to many innovative companies, but many public and private academic institutions, medical schools, military bases and hospitals. Our state is the host to important research outside of the commercial world. These researchers, who share their work with public and private enterprise across the U.S. by publishing study results in scholarly journals, are greatly dependent on their patents to ensure that their advancements are not usurped.

Patent holders in Connecticut and across the nation depend on our representatives to thoughtfully consider the consequences of The Patent Reform Act of 2007. We have worked hard to develop our intellectual property and only want to enjoy the protection that the U.S. patent system is intended to provide.

We support many aspects of the patent reform legislation and recognize that the current legislation would benefit some other business sectors. However, we firmly believe that any reforms to the current patent system should reinforce the patents that Boehringer Ingelheim, Pfizer and other research-based firms and institutions obtain and not be done at the expense of America's - and Connecticut's - key research-driven industries, or their valued workers.

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