

**Tennessee  
Inventors  
Association**



**Oak Ridge  
Knoxville  
East Tennessee**

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Knoxville, Tennessee 37923

June 20, 2011

Congressman John J. Duncan, Jr.  
Knoxville District Office  
800 Market Street, Suite 110  
Knoxville, TN 37902

RE: America Invents Act, H.R. 1249

Dear Congressman Duncan,

I am the president of the Tennessee Inventors Association. I am also a patent attorney with many independent inventors and small start ups as clients. I wish to make it known that the United Inventors Association (UIA) and Louis Foreman do not speak for the inventors of Tennessee.

I and the independent inventors I work with do not approve of the America Invents Act, H.R. 1249. Independent inventors will be disadvantaged by the changes proposed in the America Invents Act. For example, the change from first-to-invent to first-to-file favors inventors with sufficient financial backing to file multiple patent applications at the front end. These are typically corporate inventors, not independent inventors. Another example is the removal of the grace period before a patent application is filed. Independent inventors rely upon that grace period for invention development. With limited resources, independent inventors rely upon the grace period and other aspects of the current patent law in order to continue to innovate.

I urge you to vote no to stop the America Invents Act, H.R. 1249. The bill is being rushed through Congress without time for the true stakeholders, the independent inventors, to provide their input.

Thomas Kulaga  
President, Tennessee Inventors Association  
Patent Attorney, Knox Patents