



December 2, 2013

Speaker John Boehner
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol, Room H-232
Washington, DC 20515

Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
U.S. House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol, Room H-204
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), its more than 1,500 member organizations, and millions of public transportation riders, I write to urge the House of Representatives to pass H.R. 3309, the Innovation Act of 2013. The Act is a significant step toward combating widespread abuses of the legal system by “patent trolls” who are rapidly expanding their predatory practice of meritless lawsuits against transit providers, businesses, and state and local governments.

Patent trolls have threatened public transportation agencies across the country with bogus patent infringement claims. Opting not to undertake expensive and time-consuming litigation, which would cost millions of dollars, many of these cash-strapped transit agencies have agreed to financial settlements with patent trolls sacrificing scarce resources that should have been devoted to providing needed public transportation to move people to their jobs, schools, and places of worship.

The Innovation Act raises the hurdle for patent trolls to claim patent infringement and places the burden on these predatory actors to demonstrate that their claims of infringement are truly credible. The Act also mandates relief and consideration to entities frivolously accused of violating patent agreements. These provisions will allow transit agencies, businesses, and government to move forward with innovative technology to provide quality service to their riders, customers, and constituents without fear of baseless litigation.

We appreciate the leadership of Congressman Goodlatte, who sponsored H.R. 3309, and the bi-partisan efforts of the House Judiciary Committee to advance the Act. Now, we urge the entire House to pass the bill. If you have questions, please have your staff contact Brian Tynan of APTA's Government Affairs Department at (202) 496-4897 or email btynan@apta.com.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Melaniphy
President & CEO

MPM/bt

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