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Comments Submitted by Will Hairston

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The PTAB has functioned as a killing field for smaller companies who have gotten patents that have displeased larger companies with generous legal department budgets. It is daunting and discouraging to see so many companies get patents are start to get market traction and be brought before the PTAB firing squad. It feels like most USPTO staffers are fine with the process as long as the biggest companies are pleased with them.

I attended a seminar on patent quality where all the speakers started their comments by stating they really had no clue what patent quality was.

If you had a deed to your house and you weren't sure if would hold up in court if a neighbor challenged it... that would be a low quality real property deed. If you are not sure your patent will hold up in court that is a low quality patent. The PTAB has made most patent holders or wannabe patent holders unsure if any patent can be high quality as long as the PTAB is picking off (killing) patents when requested to. The USPTO seems to care much more about not displeasing big companies than assuring patent quality.

Asking if patents thwart innovation is like asking if laws throttle moral actions. Strong patent laws and innovation go hand in hand. As an inventor who regularly attends USPTO events I have come to the conclusion that most USPTO staffers either do not understand inventors or are hostile to inventors. The patent systems can function like a $30K-50K tax on inventors wanting protection where 95% see no income from their patent. Young independent inventors need protection from being runover by the "bus" of established big companies. Most USPTO staffers do not see the bus/inventors conflict and regularly throw inventors under the bus without even being aware they are doing it. I have even heard staffers say things like "these independent pro se inventors are just a waste of time". To fuel new innovations the patents system should be free or even offering inventors upfront payments for valuable innovations. The bus companies would not like that and would feel threatened by that. The higher the fees, the more they are protected from new inventors creating disruptive innovations. The USPTO should immediately stop

requiring staff come from impressive universities with impressive degrees. They should instead hire people who show impressive understanding and skill in promoting inventors and inventions. At times they are somewhat exclusive. Truly and dramatically inventive people often do not complete college or in Sean Parkers case...high school.

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