



US Inventor sets patents on fire as part of PTAB protest at USPTO



By [Steve Brachmann](#) & [Gene Quinn](#)
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“We did about as good as we could have hoped for,” Landreneau said. “We did it all and didn’t get arrested.”



U.S. Inventor Director Paul Morinville (hat) speaks with Acting USPTO Director Joe Matal (pink tie), Friday, August 11, 2017.

On Friday, August 11th, inventor rights group [US Inventor](#) held an event at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office where the group honored excellence in high quality patent examination. US Inventor also staged a peaceful protest to raise issues surrounding [high rates of patent invalidation resulting from decisions](#) made by the [Patent Trial and Appeal Board](#) (PTAB). Despite going on with the protest after [the USPTO denied a use permit application for the event](#), a source from the event reports that all planned aspects of the protest, including the burning of patents in clear view of the USPTO, occurred without anyone going to jail.

[Randy Landreneau](#), a member of US Inventor’s managing board, said in a phone interview that the day’s events seemed to be very successful from the viewpoint of those protesting. “We did about as good as we could have hoped for,” Landreneau said. “We did it all and didn’t get arrested.”

According to Landreneau, patent owners and others taking part in the protest began to arrive to the USPTO facilities in Alexandria, VA, around 7:30 AM Friday morning and began the day handing out flyers to anyone passing by. A picture we received this morning from [Josh Malone](#), Fellow at US Inventor, shows current USPTO Acting Director [Joseph Matal](#) speaking with [Paul Morinville](#) of US Inventor along with Roman Chistyakov and Bassam Abraham of Zond, a

company that saw a total of 371 patent claims invalidated by the PTAB [after being faced with 125 petitions for inter partes review \(IPR\) proceedings](#). “We were happy that we were out there protesting and trying to bring these PTAB issues to light,” Landreneau said.

“Today’s peaceful demonstration underscores the PTO’s erroneous denial of US Inventor’s permit application,” explained patent attorney [Matthew Dowd](#), who represented US Inventor in [an appeal](#) of the [denial of the use permit](#). “The PTO did not explain its decision and did not provide any guidance on what it believed would be a reasonable time, place, and manner restriction on US Inventor’s ability to express its views on the patent system. Nonetheless, US Inventor took a stand and lawfully exercised its First Amendment rights in a public forum. Today establishes an important precedent for those who wish to express their views about the patent system.”

At a little after 11 AM, US Inventor commenced a ceremony in which the group handed out awards to patent examiners to recognize excellence in patent examination at the USPTO. One examiner was there to accept an award. According to Landreneau, the low attendance could be due to examiners being out of town or some examiners feeling pressure from supervisors regarding their attendance at the event.

After the examiner ceremony concluded, inventors went to the front steps of the USPTO and lit their patents on fire. According to Landreneau, a total of six patents were burnt in this manner. Multiple major news outlets filmed the event including BBC, FOX and C-SPAN. “Hopefully, this will really get the message out,” Landreneau said.

No arrests were made despite the denial of the permit, and the police and others on the scene allowed the protest to go on as previously scheduled. “The Alexandria Police Department, the Alexandria Fire Department, and the Federal Protective Service must be thanked for facilitating a successful event,” Dowd explained.

Voiv. Del. Ex. 2086

Matal showing up to the protest and speaking with Morinville and some of the other protesters was a very smart move. Rather than further antagonize the situation and relationship with inventors the USPTO seemed today to go out of their way to acknowledge the protest and allow it to continue, although just yesterday at least some at the USPTO were trying to stop the protest without much, if any, explanation. Acting Director Matal taking time to personally make an appearance should strike those rightfully concerned about the PTAB as a meaningful gesture and will hopefully demonstrate a turning of a page. Time will tell.



Patents burn at US Inventor PTAB protest at the USPTO, Friday, August 11, 2017. New media (left) cover the event. Photo taken by patent attorney Matt Dowd (@TheRealMattDowd on Twitter).

UPDATE 1: Friday, August 11, 2017 at 3:57pm ET.

UPDATE 2: Friday, August 11, 2017 at 4:48pm ET to add photo courtesy of patent attorney Matt Dowd.

UPDATE 3: Friday, August 11, 2017 at 5:13pm ET to add quotes from patent attorney Matt Dowd.

Tags: [award](#), [Bassam Abraham](#), [BBC](#), [burn patent](#), [C-SPAN](#), [deny permit](#), [examination](#), [examiner](#), [FOX](#), [high quality](#), [invalid](#), [Joe Matal](#), [Josh Malone](#), [patent](#), [Patent Trial and Appeal Board](#), [Paul Morinville](#), [permit](#), [protest](#), [PTAB](#), [Randy Landreneau](#), [Roman Chistyakov](#), [US Inventor](#), [use permit](#), [USPTO](#), [Zond](#)

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There are currently **55** comments.

Judge Rich's Ghost August 11, 2017 4:23 pm

Here is a better picture of the patent burning: <https://twitter.com/TheRealMattDowd/status/89608127577306624>

Tesia Thomas August 11, 2017 4:42 pm

AWESOME!

Couldn't make it due to lack of PTO but I'm happy it all went well.

Ron Nesson August 11, 2017 5:20 pm

Sometimes you have to light a fire to get the public's attention. It is most unfortunate that inventors have to go to this length to draw attention to the current plight that America is facing in getting their intellectual property legitimized. The rest of the world must be laughing at the stupidity of the current predicament the US Congress has put our country in. There is too much at stake to not step up and expose this dangerous and deleterious situation we are facing.

Confused Pharmacist August 11, 2017 6:38 pm

I'm afraid this is going to fall on deaf ears. With the whole Google diversity memo thing going on, and if the pictures above are representative of those that protested, those in power won't care too much for mostly white male inventors. Just sayin...

Tesia Thomas August 11, 2017 6:40 pm

That's the problem with this whole diversity crap.

Confused Pharmacist August 11, 2017 6:47 pm

Tesia,

Yeah it's not going to make Google very happy, especially seeing that one guy with the cowboy hat! That's precise the image that people in Google actively despise.

Tesia Thomas August 11, 2017 7:04 pm

@Confused Pharmacist,

I hate that I wasn't there. Maybe I should make a video burning my pending PCT application or a prototype of my invention. "I'm with US Inventors. F*** your diversity BS and LISTEN to them. Google is EVIL!!"

If people think it'd make a difference then I 100% will do it. It's the weekend now. I'm off. Actually, I'm only 3 hours drive from Detroit USPTO.

This is also the same problem with DoD and other government agencies stealing inventions from white males for the past 50 years. No one cares. It's all about women and minorities getting set asides.

I'm hoping that I can change that.

Everyone struggles and we need to see people as individuals not as part of a group based on race or sex.

Why should people care that I'm a minority female inventor when I have the problems of a white male inventor, and vice versa? Why do people care who speaks about the problems?

angry dude August 11, 2017 8:17 pm

google was started by the jewish immigrant from russia and another jewish dude living here in US and they got their first investment (blank check) from another jewish guy...

I do not see much diversity here...

PS I am a "slavic" russian from ukraine and I feel like a third rate sh1t in this country despite all my phds and patent

Ternary August 11, 2017 8:28 pm

AD@8: You sound like some older and abhorrent times in a place I don't want to be in. These remarks have no place in a decent forum.

angry dude August 11, 2017 8:44 pm

Ternary

I am not racist or anti-semitic

but I never had nearly the same opportunities as those pos google founders had and they are no smarter than I am. period.

PS "diversity" BS is racist in its nature

