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Senate

The Senate met at 3 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

O God our rock, we look to You for safety in a chaotic world. We are grateful that You hear our prayers, responding to our requests for help.

Be a shield for our Senators, protecting them from dangers seen and unseen. As they put their trust in You, fill them with Your Spirit, giving them confidence in the unfolding of Your powerful providence. Lord, remind them that no weapon formed against them will ultimately prosper. Lead them like a shepherd beside still waters, as You fill their hearts with Your peace.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. YOUNG). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The Senator from Utah.

NOMINATION OF ANDREI IANCU

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise in support of the nomination of Andrei

Iancu to be Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

USPTO is critically important. It is a critically important agency that stands at the crossroads of innovation, technology, and property rights. It is tasked with ensuring that our laws properly compensate ingenuity and invention, while at the same time stopping bad actors who seek to game the system.

Intellectual property has been a focus of mine throughout my entire Senate service. Early in my tenure, I authored the Hatch-Waxman Act, which made possible the rise of the modern generic drug industry. More recently, I played a key role in the America Invents Act, which rebalanced our patent system to ensure high-quality patents and reduce abusive litigation. Just last Congress, I authored the Defend Trade Secrets Act, a landmark piece of legislation that created a federal private cause of action to prevent trade secret theft and other nefarious activity.

I have also led the charge against patent trolling—the practice of buying up patents solely for the purpose of bringing lawsuits—and argued forcefully that forum shopping in patent cases must not be allowed. I was gratified to see the Supreme Court last year strike a blow against abusive forum shopping in its TC Heartland decision.

In my remaining months here in this body, I intend to continue ahead full-bore on intellectual property reform. Digital music licensing, royalties for visual artists, and online filtering are just a few of my intellectual property priorities for this year.

Given my focus on intellectual property, I take a keen interest in the Patent and Trademark Office and in the individual selected to run the office. I have to say that I couldn't be more pleased by President Trump's nomination of Andrei Iancu to be the next USPTO Director.

Andrei has an extensive background in patent litigation. He is a partner at Irell & Manella, one of the Nation's leading intellectual property law firms. For 6 years, he was the firm's managing partner. Andrei has represented clients across the spectrum, from tech companies to drug manufacturers to aerospace firms. He understands all sides of patent law because he has litigated all sides.

In an area fraught with allegiances to particular industries or groups, Andrei can bring a neutral, unbiased perspective because he has already had to approach issues from so many different angles.

Andrei has been named a leader in intellectual property and patent law by Chambers USA every year for the last 11 years. He has been named attorney of the year by California Lawyer and lawyer of the year by the Los Angeles Business Journal. His bona fides are top notch. I have full confidence that Andrei will make an outstanding USPTO Director.

Subject-matter eligibility, PTAB reform, and continued controversies over forum shopping are just a handful of the issues that will soon be coming across his desk. There will also be questions about fee setting, fee diversion, and IT modernization. As I move forward on my intellectual property priorities this year, I look forward to working with Andrei and his future colleagues at USPTO to make our patent and trademark system the best it can possibly be.

We owe it to the American people to ensure that our intellectual property laws keep pace with our rapidly changing world. That has always been one of my chief focuses here in this body, and it will continue to be so throughout the rest of my term.

DATA PRIVACY

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I would also like to take a couple of minutes to

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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