

Court Information Release



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

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PATENT PILOT PROJECT IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

CHICAGO – The Northern District of Illinois is one of fourteen United States district courts selected to participate in a statutorily-created, ten-year program designed to evaluate the adjudication of patent cases.

On Monday, September 19, 2011, the Patent Pilot Project will commence across the country. The designated Patent Pilot Project judges in the Northern District of Illinois are:

Chief Judge James F. Holderman
Judge Ruben Castillo
Judge John W. Darrah
Judge Gary S. Feinerman
Judge Virginia Kendall
Judge Matthew F. Kennelly
Judge Joan Humphrey Lefkow
Judge Rebecca R. Pallmeyer
Judge Amy J. St. Eve
Judge James B. Zagel

All of the Northern District of Illinois district judges will remain eligible to be initially assigned newly filed patent cases, but those judges not designated as Patent Pilot judges may, within thirty days of receiving a randomly assigned patent case, order it to be reassigned. That patent case will then be randomly reassigned among the designated Patent Pilot judges for adjudication.

The Administrative Office of the United States Courts will make periodic reports to the Judiciary Committees of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. These periodic reports are statutorily required to include:

(A) an analysis of the extent to which the program has succeeded in developing expertise in patent and plant variety protection cases among the district judges of the district courts so designated;

(B) an analysis of the extent to which the program has improved the efficiency of the courts involved by reason of such expertise;

(C) with respect to patent cases handled by the [patent pilot] judges designated and judges not so designated, a comparison between the 2 groups of judges with respect to -

(I) the rate of reversal by the Court of Appeals for Federal Circuit, of such cases on the issues of claim construction and substantive patent law; and

(ii) the period of time elapsed from the date on which a case is filed to the date on which trial begins or summary judgment is entered;

(D) a discussion of any evidence indicating that litigants select certain of the judicial districts designated under subsection (b) in an attempt to ensure a given outcome; and

(E) an analysis of whether the pilot program should be extended to other district courts, or should be made permanent and apply to all district courts.

The other thirteen federal district courts participating in the Patent Pilot Project are: Central, Northern, and Southern California; Nevada; New Jersey; Eastern and Southern New York; Western Pennsylvania; Western Tennessee; and Eastern, Northern, and Western Texas.