

several joint inventors cannot be found. This section is ancillary to section 256.

#### AMENDMENTS

2011—Pub. L. 112-29 designated first to third pars. as subsecs. (a) to (c), respectively, inserted headings, and, in subsec. (c), struck out “and such error arose without any deceptive intention on his part,” before “the Director”.

2002—Pub. L. 107-273 made technical correction to directory language of Pub. L. 106-113. See 1999 Amendment note below.

1999—Pub. L. 106-113, as amended by Pub. L. 107-273, substituted “Director” for “Commissioner” in two places.

1984—Pub. L. 98-622 amended first par. generally, striking out “and each sign the application” after “patent jointly” and inserting sentence beginning “Inventors may apply”.

1982—Pub. L. 97-247 substituted “Inventors” for “Joint inventors” as section catchline, and substituted “through error a person is named in an application for patent as the inventor, or through error an inventor is not named in an application” for “a person is joined in an application for patent as joint inventor through error, or a joint inventor is not included in an application through error”.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2011 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112-29 effective upon the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on Sept. 16, 2011, and applicable to proceedings commenced on or after that effective date, see section 20(l) of Pub. L. 112-29, set out as a note under section 2 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1999 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 106-113 effective 4 months after Nov. 29, 1999, see section 1000(a)(9) [title IV, §4731] of Pub. L. 106-113, set out as a note under section 1 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1984 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 98-622 applicable to all United States patents granted before, on, or after Nov. 8, 1984, and to all applications for United States patents pending on or filed after that date, except as otherwise provided, see section 106 of Pub. L. 98-622, set out as a note under section 103 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1982 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 97-247 effective six months after Aug. 27, 1982, see section 17(c) of Pub. L. 97-247, set out as an Effective Date note under section 294 of this title.

### § 117. Death or incapacity of inventor

Legal representatives of deceased inventors and of those under legal incapacity may make application for patent upon compliance with the requirements and on the same terms and conditions applicable to the inventor.

(July 19, 1952, ch. 950, 66 Stat. 799.)

#### HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on Title 35, U.S.C., 1946 ed., §46 (R.S. 4896, amended (1) Feb. 28, 1899, ch. 227, 30 Stat. 915, (2) Mar. 3, 1903, ch. 1019, §3, 32 Stat. 1225, 1226, (3) May 23, 1908, ch. 188, 35 Stat. 245).

The language has been considerably simplified.

### § 118. Filing by other than inventor

A person to whom the inventor has assigned or is under an obligation to assign the invention may make an application for patent. A person who otherwise shows sufficient proprietary in-

terest in the matter may make an application for patent on behalf of and as agent for the inventor on proof of the pertinent facts and a showing that such action is appropriate to preserve the rights of the parties. If the Director grants a patent on an application filed under this section by a person other than the inventor, the patent shall be granted to the real party in interest and upon such notice to the inventor as the Director considers to be sufficient.

(July 19, 1952, ch. 950, 66 Stat. 799; Pub. L. 106-113, div. B, §1000(a)(9) [title IV, §4732(a)(10)(A)], Nov. 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A-582; Pub. L. 107-273, div. C, title III, §13206(b)(1)(B), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1906; Pub. L. 112-29, §4(b)(1), Sept. 16, 2011, 125 Stat. 296.)

#### HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

This section is new and provides for the filing of an application by another on behalf of the inventor in certain special hardship situations.

#### AMENDMENTS

2011—Pub. L. 112-29 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “Whenever an inventor refuses to execute an application for patent, or cannot be found or reached after diligent effort, a person to whom the inventor has assigned or agreed in writing to assign the invention or who otherwise shows sufficient proprietary interest in the matter justifying such action, may make application for patent on behalf of and as agent for the inventor on proof of the pertinent facts and a showing that such action is necessary to preserve the rights of the parties or to prevent irreparable damage; and the Director may grant a patent to such inventor upon such notice to him as the Director deems sufficient, and on compliance with such regulations as he prescribes.”

2002—Pub. L. 107-273 made technical correction to directory language of Pub. L. 106-113. See 1999 Amendment note below.

1999—Pub. L. 106-113, as amended by Pub. L. 107-273, substituted “Director” for “Commissioner” in two places.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2011 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112-29 effective upon the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on Sept. 16, 2011, and applicable to any patent application that is filed on or after that effective date, see section 4(e) of Pub. L. 112-29, set out as a note under section 111 of this title.

#### EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1999 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 106-113 effective 4 months after Nov. 29, 1999, see section 1000(a)(9) [title IV, §4731] of Pub. L. 106-113, set out as a note under section 1 of this title.

### § 119. Benefit of earlier filing date; right of priority

(a) An application for patent for an invention filed in this country by any person who has, or whose legal representatives or assigns have, previously regularly filed an application for a patent for the same invention in a foreign country which affords similar privileges in the case of applications filed in the United States or to citizens of the United States, or in a WTO member country, shall have the same effect as the same application would have if filed in this country on the date on which the application for patent for the same invention was first filed in such foreign country, if the application in this coun-