

(2) a “customer” is any individual who enters into a contract with an invention promoter for invention promotion services;

(3) the term “invention promoter” means any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity who offers to perform or performs invention promotion services for, or on behalf of, a customer, and who holds itself out through advertising in any mass media as providing such services, but does not include—

(A) any department or agency of the Federal Government or of a State or local government;

(B) any nonprofit, charitable, scientific, or educational organization, qualified under applicable State law or described under section 170(b)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

(C) any person or entity involved in the evaluation to determine commercial potential of, or offering to license or sell, a utility patent or a previously filed nonprovisional utility patent application;

(D) any party participating in a transaction involving the sale of the stock or assets of a business; or

(E) any party who directly engages in the business of retail sales of products or the distribution of products; and

(4) the term “invention promotion services” means the procurement or attempted procurement for a customer of a firm, corporation, or other entity to develop and market products or services that include the invention of the customer.

(d) RECORDS OF COMPLAINTS.—

(1) RELEASE OF COMPLAINTS.—The Commissioner of Patents shall make all complaints received by the Patent and Trademark Office involving invention promoters publicly available, together with any response of the invention promoters. The Commissioner of Patents shall notify the invention promoter of a complaint and provide a reasonable opportunity to reply prior to making such complaint publicly available.

(2) REQUEST FOR COMPLAINTS.—The Commissioner of Patents may request complaints relating to invention promotion services from any Federal or State agency and include such complaints in the records maintained under paragraph (1), together with any response of the invention promoters.

(Added Pub. L. 106–113, div. B, §1000(a)(9) [title IV, §4102(a)], Nov. 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A–552.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 170(b)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, referred to in subsec. (c)(3)(B), is classified to section 170(b)(1)(A) of Title 26, Internal Revenue Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Pub. L. 106–113, div. B, §1000(a)(9) [title IV, subtitle A, §4103], Nov. 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A–554, provided that: “This subtitle [enacting this section and provisions set out as a note under section 1 of this title] and the amendments made by this subtitle shall take effect 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act [Nov. 29, 1999].”

§ 298. Advice of counsel

The failure of an infringer to obtain the advice of counsel with respect to any allegedly infringed patent, or the failure of the infringer to present such advice to the court or jury, may not be used to prove that the accused infringer willfully infringed the patent or that the infringer intended to induce infringement of the patent.

(Added Pub. L. 112–29, §17(a), Sept. 16, 2011, 125 Stat. 329.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Pub. L. 112–274, §1(a), Jan. 14, 2013, 126 Stat. 2456, provided that: “Notwithstanding section 35 of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act [Pub. L. 112–29] (35 U.S.C. 1 note), section 298 of title 35, United States Code, shall apply to any civil action commenced on or after the date of the enactment of this Act [Jan. 14, 2013].”

Except as otherwise provided in Pub. L. 112–29, section effective upon the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on Sept. 16, 2011, and applicable to any patent issued on or after that effective date, see section 35 of Pub. L. 112–29, set out as an Effective Date of 2011 Amendment note under section 1 of this title.

§ 299. Joinder of parties

(a) JOINDER OF ACCUSED INFRINGERS.—With respect to any civil action arising under any Act of Congress relating to patents, other than an action or trial in which an act of infringement under section 271(e)(2) has been pled, parties that are accused infringers may be joined in one action as defendants or counterclaim defendants, or have their actions consolidated for trial, only if—

(1) any right to relief is asserted against the parties jointly, severally, or in the alternative with respect to or arising out of the same transaction, occurrence, or series of transactions or occurrences relating to the making, using, importing into the United States, offering for sale, or selling of the same accused product or process; and

(2) questions of fact common to all defendants or counterclaim defendants will arise in the action.

(b) ALLEGATIONS INSUFFICIENT FOR JOINDER.—For purposes of this subsection, accused infringers may not be joined in one action as defendants or counterclaim defendants, or have their actions consolidated for trial, based solely on allegations that they each have infringed the patent or patents in suit.

(c) WAIVER.—A party that is an accused infringer may waive the limitations set forth in this section with respect to that party.

(Added Pub. L. 112–29, §19(d)(1), Sept. 16, 2011, 125 Stat. 332; amended Pub. L. 112–274, §1(c), Jan. 14, 2013, 126 Stat. 2456.)

AMENDMENTS

2013—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 112–274 substituted “only if” for “or counterclaim defendants only if” in introductory provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2013 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112–274 effective Jan. 14, 2013, and applicable to proceedings commenced on or after such date, see section 1(n) of Pub. L. 112–274, set out as a note under section 5 of this title.