

§ 323. Preliminary response to petition

If a post-grant review petition is filed under section 321, the patent owner shall have the right to file a preliminary response to the petition, within a time period set by the Director, that sets forth reasons why no post-grant review should be instituted based upon the failure of the petition to meet any requirement of this chapter.

(Added Pub. L. 112-29, §6(d), Sept. 16, 2011, 125 Stat. 306.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective upon the expiration of the 1-year period beginning Sept. 16, 2011, and applicable only to patents described in section 3(n)(1) of Pub. L. 112-29 (35 U.S.C. 100 note), with certain exceptions and limitations, see section 6(f)(2), (3) of Pub. L. 112-29, set out as a note under section 321 of this title.

§ 324. Institution of post-grant review

(a) **THRESHOLD.**—The Director may not authorize a post-grant review to be instituted unless the Director determines that the information presented in the petition filed under section 321, if such information is not rebutted, would demonstrate that it is more likely than not that at least 1 of the claims challenged in the petition is unpatentable.

(b) **ADDITIONAL GROUNDS.**—The determination required under subsection (a) may also be satisfied by a showing that the petition raises a novel or unsettled legal question that is important to other patents or patent applications.

(c) **TIMING.**—The Director shall determine whether to institute a post-grant review under this chapter pursuant to a petition filed under section 321 within 3 months after—

- (1) receiving a preliminary response to the petition under section 323; or
- (2) if no such preliminary response is filed, the last date on which such response may be filed.

(d) **NOTICE.**—The Director shall notify the petitioner and patent owner, in writing, of the Director's determination under subsection (a) or (b), and shall make such notice available to the public as soon as is practicable. Such notice shall include the date on which the review shall commence.

(e) **NO APPEAL.**—The determination by the Director whether to institute a post-grant review under this section shall be final and nonappealable.

(Added Pub. L. 112-29, §6(d), Sept. 16, 2011, 125 Stat. 306.)

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective upon the expiration of the 1-year period beginning Sept. 16, 2011, and applicable only to patents described in section 3(n)(1) of Pub. L. 112-29 (35 U.S.C. 100 note), with certain exceptions and limitations, see section 6(f)(2), (3) of Pub. L. 112-29, set out as a note under section 321 of this title.

§ 325. Relation to other proceedings or actions

(a) **INFRINGEMENT'S CIVIL ACTION.**—

(1) **POST-GRANT REVIEW BARRED BY CIVIL ACTION.**—A post-grant review may not be instituted under this chapter if, before the date on

which the petition for such a review is filed, the petitioner or real party in interest filed a civil action challenging the validity of a claim of the patent.

(2) **STAY OF CIVIL ACTION.**—If the petitioner or real party in interest files a civil action challenging the validity of a claim of the patent on or after the date on which the petitioner files a petition for post-grant review of the patent, that civil action shall be automatically stayed until either—

- (A) the patent owner moves the court to lift the stay;
- (B) the patent owner files a civil action or counterclaim alleging that the petitioner or real party in interest has infringed the patent; or
- (C) the petitioner or real party in interest moves the court to dismiss the civil action.

(3) **TREATMENT OF COUNTERCLAIM.**—A counterclaim challenging the validity of a claim of a patent does not constitute a civil action challenging the validity of a claim of a patent for purposes of this subsection.

(b) **PRELIMINARY INJUNCTIONS.**—If a civil action alleging infringement of a patent is filed within 3 months after the date on which the patent is granted, the court may not stay its consideration of the patent owner's motion for a preliminary injunction against infringement of the patent on the basis that a petition for post-grant review has been filed under this chapter or that such a post-grant review has been instituted under this chapter.

(c) **JOINDER.**—If more than 1 petition for a post-grant review under this chapter is properly filed against the same patent and the Director determines that more than 1 of these petitions warrants the institution of a post-grant review under section 324, the Director may consolidate such reviews into a single post-grant review.

(d) **MULTIPLE PROCEEDINGS.**—Notwithstanding sections 135(a), 251, and 252, and chapter 30, during the pendency of any post-grant review under this chapter, if another proceeding or matter involving the patent is before the Office, the Director may determine the manner in which the post-grant review or other proceeding or matter may proceed, including providing for the stay, transfer, consolidation, or termination of any such matter or proceeding. In determining whether to institute or order a proceeding under this chapter, chapter 30, or chapter 31, the Director may take into account whether, and reject the petition or request because, the same or substantially the same prior art or arguments previously were presented to the Office.

(e) **ESTOPPEL.**—

(1) **PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE OFFICE.**—The petitioner in a post-grant review of a claim in a patent under this chapter that results in a final written decision under section 328(a), or the real party in interest or privy of the petitioner, may not request or maintain a proceeding before the Office with respect to that claim on any ground that the petitioner raised or reasonably could have raised during that post-grant review.

(2) **CIVIL ACTIONS AND OTHER PROCEEDINGS.**—The petitioner in a post-grant review of a