Estimated Total Annual (Non-hour) Respondent Cost Burden: $53,307.84 per year. This collection has no capital start-up, maintenance, or operating fees.

**Filing Fees**

There are fees associated with this collection, specifically for the Petition to Make Special, which has a fee amount of $100 per respondent. The total estimated filing-fee cost for this collection is $53,300.00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IC No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Filing fee</th>
<th>Total cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 ......</td>
<td>Petition to Make Special (TEAS Global)</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$53,100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 ......</td>
<td>Petition to Make Special (Paper)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td>533</td>
<td></td>
<td>$53,300.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Postage Cost**

Applicants incur postage costs when submitting non-electronic information to the USPTO by mail through the United States Postal Service (USPS). The USPTO estimates that the vast majority—approximately 98%—of the paper forms are submitted to the USPTO via first-class mail, while the rest are submitted by hand delivery. The USPTO estimates that 16 forms will be mailed. The average first-class USPS postage cost for a mailed submission is $0.50. Therefore, the USPTO estimates that the postage costs for the mailed submissions in this collection will total $8.

Therefore, the USPTO estimates that the total annual (non-hour) cost burden for this collection, in the form of filing fees ($53,300) and postage costs ($8), is $53,308 per year.

**IV. Request for Comments**

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection. They also will become a matter of public record.

Comments are invited on:

(a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility;

(b) The accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information;

(c) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(d) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, e.g., the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Marcie Lovett, 
Records and Information Governance Division Director, OCTO, United States Patent and Trademark Office.

[FR Doc. 2018–08021 Filed 4–16–18; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3510–16–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

Third-Party Submissions and Protests

ACTION: Proposed collection; comment request.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before June 18, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods:

• Email: InformationCollection@uspto.gov. Include “0651–0062 comment” in the subject line of the message.


• Mail: Marcie Lovett, Records and Information Governance Division Director, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313–1450.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information should be directed to Raul Tamayo, Senior Legal Advisor, Office of Patent Legal Administration, United States Patent and Trademark Office, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313–1450; by telephone at 571–272–7728; or by email to Raul.Tamayo@uspto.gov with “0651–0062 comment” in the subject line. Additional information about this collection is also available at http://www.reginfo.gov under “Information Collection Review.”

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is required by 35 U.S.C. 131 et seq. to examine an application for patent and, when appropriate, issue a patent. The provisions of 35 U.S.C. 122(c), 122(e), 131, and 151, as well as 37 CFR 1.290 and 1.291, limit the ability of a third party to have information entered and considered in, or to protest, a patent application pending before the Office. 37 CFR 1.290 provides a mechanism for third parties to submit to the USPTO, for consideration and inclusion in the record of a patent application, any patents, published patent applications, or other printed publications of potential relevance to the examination of the application. A third-party submission under 37 CFR 1.290 may be made in any non-provisional utility, design, and plant application, as well as in any continuing application. A third-party submission under 37 CFR 1.290 must include a concise description of the asserted relevance of each document submitted, and must be submitted within a certain statutorily specified time period. 37 CFR 1.291 permits a member of the public to file a protest against a pending application. Protests pursuant to 37 CFR 1.291 are supported by a separated statutory provision from third-party submissions under 37 CFR 1.290 (35 U.S.C. 122(c) v. 35 U.S.C. 122(e)). As a result, there are several differences between protests and third-party submissions.

For example, 37 CFR 1.291 permits the submission of information in a protest that is not permitted in a third-party submission under 37 CFR 1.290. Specifically, 37 CFR 1.291 provides for the submission of information, including any facts or information adverse to patentability. Further, 37 CFR 1.291 requires a protest to include a concise explanation of the relevance of each item of information submitted. Unlike the concise description of relevance required for a third-party submission under 37 CFR 1.290, which is limited to a description of a document’s relevance, the concise explanation for a protest under 37 CFR 1.291 allows for arguments against patentability. Additionally, the specified time period for submitting a protest differs from the time period for submitting third-party submissions, and is impacted by whether the protest is accompanied by the written consent of the applicant.

This information collection is necessary so that the public may contribute to the quality of issued patents. The USPTO will use this information, as appropriate, to assist in evaluating the patent application as it moves through the patent examination process.

II. Method of Collection

OMB Number: 0651–0062.

IC Instruments: PTO/SB/429.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>Third party submission</th>
<th>Protest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Printed publications</td>
<td>Printing publications and any facts or information adverse to patentability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarks</td>
<td>Concise description of relevance (limited to a concise description of each document’s relevance).</td>
<td>Concise explanation of the relevance (allows for arguments against patentability).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>Prior to Allowance and prior to later of: 6 months after Pre-Grant Publication or first rejection of any claim.</td>
<td>Prior to Allowance, Pre-Grant Publication or prior to Pre-Grant Publication with application consent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Affected Public: Individuals or households; businesses or other for-profits; and not-for-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,450 responses per year.

Estimated Time per Response: The USPTO estimates that it will take the public approximately 10 hours to gather the necessary information, prepare the appropriate form or document, and submit the information to the USPTO.

Estimated Total Annual Hour Burden: 14,500 hours.

Estimated Annual Respondent (Hourly) Cost Burden: $6,351,000.00.

The USPTO expects that intellectual property attorneys in private firms will complete the instruments associated with this information collection. The professional hourly rate is $438. The rate is established by estimates in the 2017 Report on the Economic Survey, published by the Committee on Economics of Legal Practice of the American Intellectual Property Law Association. Using this hourly rate, the USPTO estimates that the total respondent cost burden for this collection is $6,351,000 per year.
TABLE 1—BURDEN HOUR AND COST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IC No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Response time (hours)</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Annual burden hours</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Total cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Third-Party Submissions in Non-issued Applications (electronic).</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>$438.00</td>
<td>$6,132,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Third-Party Submissions in Non-issued Applications (paper).</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>$438.00</td>
<td>175,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Protests by the Public Against Pending Applications Under 37 CFR 1.291 (paper).</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>$438.00</td>
<td>43,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>14,500</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,351,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Estimated Total Annual (Non-hour) Respondent Cost Burden: $74,160 per year. There are no capital start-up, recordkeeping or maintenance costs associated with this information collection. There are, however, annual (non-hour) costs associated with this information collection in the form of filing fees and postage costs. In particular, 37 CFR 1.290 requires payment of the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(o) ($180 undiscounted; $90 for a small or micro entity) for every ten documents, or fraction thereof, listed in each third-party submission.

The USPTO provides an exemption from the 1.17(o) fee requirement where a third-party submission listing three or fewer total documents is the first third-party submission submitted in an application by the third party, or a party in privity with the third party. The effect of this is that the first three documents submitted by a third party are exempt from the fee requirement. However, the submission of four or more documents by a third party triggers the collection of the fee. There is no fee for filing protests under 37 CFR 1.291 unless the filed protest is the second or subsequent protest by the same real party in interest, in which case the 37 CFR 1.17(i) fee of $130 must be included. The USPTO estimates that only 1 out of every 10 protests filed per year will require this fee.

When electronically submitting the information in this collection to the USPTO, the applicant is encouraged to retain a copy of the file submitted to the USPTO as evidence of the application. Inclusion of an USPS acknowledgement receipt with mailed items provides evidence of the date the file was received by the USPTO. The USPTO does not, however, require this recordkeeping, and thus does not consider this action to be a recordkeeping cost imposed on the applicant.

TABLE 2—FILING FEES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IC No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Estimated annual responses</th>
<th>Filing fee ($)</th>
<th>Total Non-hour cost burden ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–2</td>
<td>Third-Party Submissions in Non-issued Applications</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>$180.00</td>
<td>$73,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–2</td>
<td>Third-Party Submissions in Non-issued Applications (small and micro entities)</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>15,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Protests by the Public Against Pending Applications Under 37 CFR 1.291 (paper).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>130.00</td>
<td>130.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>581</td>
<td></td>
<td>73,930.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This collection also has non-hourly annual cost burden in the form of postage costs. Customers may incur postage costs when submitting the instruments contained within this collection to the USPTO by mail through the United States Postal Service. The USPTO estimates that the average first class postage cost for a one-pound submission mailed in a flat-rate envelope to be $6.70. The USPTO estimates that the vast majority—roughly 98 percent—of all paper submissions will be delivered by mail, with the remainder being delivered by hand delivery, for an estimated that approximately 40 submissions will require postage. Therefore, the estimated postage cost for this collection will be $268. The total non-hour respondent cost burden for this collection in the form of filing fees ($73,930) and postage costs ($268) is approximately $74,198.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection. They will also become a matter of public record. Comments are invited on:

(a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility;

(3) Ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(b) The accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information;

(c) Ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, e.g., the use of automated
collection techniques or other forms or information technology.

Marcie Lovett,
Records and Information Governance
Division Director, OCTO, United States Patent
and Trademark Office.

[FR Doc. 2018–08022 Filed 4–16–18; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 3510–16–P

BUREAU OF CONSUMER FINANCIAL
PROTECTION

Request for Information Regarding the
Bureau’s Consumer Complaint and
Consumer Inquiry Handling Processes

AGENCY: Bureau of Consumer Financial
Protection.

ACTION: Notice and request for
information.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Consumer
Financial Protection (Bureau) is seeking
comments and information from
interested parties to assist the Bureau in
assessing its handling of consumer
complaints and consumer inquiries and,
consistent with law, considering
whether changes to its processes would
be appropriate.

DATES: Comments must be received by
July 16, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit responsive
information and other comments,
identified by Docket No. CFPB–2018–
0014, by any of the following methods:
• Electronic: Go to http://
www.regulations.gov. Follow the
instructions for submitting comments.
• Email: FederalRegisterComments@
cfpb.gov. Include Docket No. CFPB–
2018–0014 in the subject line of the
message.
• Mail: Comment Intake, Consumer
Financial Protection Bureau, 1700 G
Street NW, Washington, DC 20552.
• Hand Delivery/Courier: Comment
Intake, Consumer Financial Protection
Bureau, 1700 G Street NW, Washington,
DC 20552.

Instructions: The Bureau encourages
the early submission of comments. All
submissions must include the document
title and docket number. Please note the
number of the topic on which you are
commenting at the top of each response
(you do not need to address all topics).
Because paper mail in the Washington,
DC area and at the Bureau is subject to
delay, commenters are encouraged to
submit comments electronically. In
general, all comments received will be
posted without change to http://
www.regulations.gov. In addition,
comments will be available for public
inspection and copying at 1700 G Street
NW, Washington, DC 20552, on official
business days between the hours of 10
a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern Time. You can
make an appointment to inspect the
documents by telephoning 202–435–
7275.

All submissions in response to this
request for information, including
attachments and other supporting
materials, will become part of the public
record and subject to public disclosure.
Proprietary information or sensitive
personal information, such as account
numbers or Social Security numbers, or
names of other individuals, should not
be included. Submissions will not be
edited to remove any identifying or
contact information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:
Darian Dorsey, Deputy Assistant
Director, Office of Consumer Response,
at 202–435–7268. If you require this
document in an alternative electronic
format, please contact CFPB
Accessibility@cfpb.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An
important aspect of the Bureau’s
mission is hearing directly from the
American public about their
experiences in the consumer financial
5511(c)(2), “collecting, investigating,
and responding to consumer
complaints” is one of the six statutory
“primary functions” of the Bureau. In
addition, ensuring that “consumers are
provided with timely and
understandable information to make
responsible decisions about financial
transactions” is one of its six
enumerated objectives.1

In furtherance of these statutory
mandates, the Dodd-Frank Wall Street
Reform and Consumer Protection Act
(Dodd-Frank Act) requires the Bureau
to establish a unit to “facilitate the
centralized collection of, monitoring of,
and response to consumer complaints
regarding consumer financial products
or services” 2 and directs the Bureau
to establish reasonable procedures to
provide timely responses to consumer
complaints and consumer inquiries.3

The Bureau defines consumer
complaints as “submissions that express
dissatisfaction with, or communicate
suspicion of wrongful conduct by, an
identifiable entity related to a
consumer’s personal experience with a
financial product or service.” 4 To date,
the Bureau has not published its
definition of consumer inquiries;
however, as an operational matter for
the purposes of establishing reasonable
procedures for providing timely
responses to consumer inquiries and for
the purposes of this request for
information, the Bureau defines
consumer inquiries as consumer
requests for information—typically
proffered by telephone—to its Office of
Consumer Response about consumer
financial products or services, the status
of a complaint, an action taken by the
Bureau, and often combinations
thereof.5

Since it began accepting consumer
complaints and consumer inquiries in
July 2011, the Bureau has established
reasonable procedures to provide
consumers with timely responses to
their complaints and inquiries, in
writing where appropriate.6 To date, the
Bureau has received more than 1.5
million consumer complaints. The
consumer complaint process seeks to
provide consumers with timely
responses to their complaints, while the
consumer inquiry process aims to
provide timely answers to consumers
who submit inquiries. Both processes
support the Bureau’s statutory objective
to provide consumers with timely and
understandable information about
consumer financial products and
services to make responsible decisions.
To that end, the Bureau has established
reasonable procedures for responding to
both consumer complaints and
consumer inquiries.

Though the Bureau is required to
establish reasonable procedures to
provide timely responses to consumer
complaints and consumer inquiries,
certain aspects of the complaint and
inquiry handling processes were
developed in furtherance of those
statutory requirements but are not
directly mandated by statute. Mindful of
the Bureau’s statutory objective to
provide consumers with timely and
understandable information about
consumer financial products and
services so they can make responsible
decisions, as well as its statutory
obligations to (1) establish reasonable
procedures to provide consumers with
timely responses and (2) centralize the
collection of consumer complaints
about consumer financial products or

2 The Bureau’s Office of Consumer Response
(“Consumer Response”) serves these and other
4 Consumer Financial Protection Bureau,
Consumer Response Annual Report [Mar. 2012],
available at http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/
5 12 U.S.C. 5511(b)(1) authorizes the Bureau to
ensure that, with respect to consumer financial
products and services, “consumers are provided
with timely and understandable information to
make responsible decisions about financial
transactions”; some of this work occurs in the
consumer complaint and inquiry processes
performed within the Office of Consumer Response.