July 17, 2019

The Honorable Michael Pompeo   The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary   Secretary
U.S. Department of State   U.S. Department of Commerce
2201 C St., NW   1401 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20520   Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Pompeo and Secretary Ross:

On behalf of the business community represented through the organizations below, we are writing to express our strong support for robust, coordinated U.S. government efforts to promote American innovation and intellectual property, including the efforts of the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office's Intellectual Property (IP) attachés working in embassies around the world. Our associations strongly endorse an appropriate elevation in rank for qualified attachés to better enable them to advocate for U.S. economic and foreign policy interests.

According to the government's own figures, intellectual property-intensive industries support at least 45.5 million U.S. jobs and 52% of all U.S. exports. Intellectual property is where innovation meets investment, and strong IP laws have been an enormous contributor to America's economic success and a key source of competitive advantage.

In an increasingly global marketplace, U.S. government officials on the front line are even more critical. USPTO's IP attachés play a critical role in ensuring that American innovations and creative works are also adequately protected abroad. Elevating the diplomatic rank of the IP attachés is critical to provide access to foreign government leaders that can enact policy reforms in support of providing fair value and market access for U.S. intellectual property assets. We support efforts to both raise the rank of the IP attachés and ensure that attachés have adequate funding to help safeguard IP around the world.
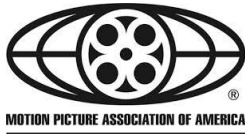
We are grateful for your support of the IP Attaché program, and we look forward to continuing our work with you to support American innovation.

Sincerely,

cc: Andrei Iancu, Director, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office