

## **Rep. Luján (Tech Transfer Caucus) Interviewed (Suggests there may be tech transfer legislation this year)**

Congressman Ben Ray Luján (whose district includes Los Alamos National Lab): was highlighted in a recent article in Politic360. [From the article](#), “New Mexico Congressman and co-founder of the bipartisan Technology Transfer Caucus, Ben Ray Luján expects to be able to bring legislation this year to support tech transfer, or the adoption of federal research in the private sector. His focus on this issue is driven by his belief that this particular form of partnership between the public and private sector feeds into the President’s goals to support entrepreneurship in the U.S. Luján said that the Department of Energy is working towards implementing presidential directives to streamline the adaption of federal research in the private sector, and that the Tech Transfer Committee would hope to support those changes with legislation this year. ... The background on tech transfer is that in 2011 President Barack Obama issued a memo outlining a five-year plan to promote tech transfer. The memo stated that one of the ways the Obama administration could support entrepreneurship is by increasing the rate of tech transfer, specifically by streamlining the government’s transfer and commercialization process, as well as facilitating local and regional partnerships. ... ‘What I expect to see this year, and what we will press to see, is the implementation of the response to the presidential directive on tech transfer — and see how we can support that from a legislative perspective.’” (Original Sources: Politic360 website)

## **High-Skilled Immigration Bill Introduced in the Senate**

A new immigration bill for high-skilled workers: was introduced in the Senate (the Immigration Innovation - I2 - Act of 2013) to bring “long-overdue reforms to the nation’s immigration laws for high-skilled workers.” From the [press release on Senator Hatch’s web site](#), “[T]he bill focuses on areas vital to ensuring the United States can maintain its competitiveness in the global economy: the quantity of employment-based nonimmigrant visas (H-1B visas), allowing for their growth depending on the demands of the economy while making reforms to protect workers; increased access to green cards for high-skilled workers by expanding the exemptions and eliminating the annual per country limits for employment based green cards; and reforming the fees on H-1B and green cards so those fees can be used to promote American worker retraining and education.” The bill increases the H-1B visa annual cap from 65,000 to 115,000 (with potential for an even higher number), among other actions. See a summary of the bill [here](#) and the full text of the legislation [here](#). Also, [the Seattle Times](#) has summarized the bill, and included some critical comments from some in the tech industry (concerning the impact on US-born workers). See [another take on the bill here](#). Finally, on a related note, AIP has summarized much of the [recent policy discussion on STEM here](#). (Original Sources: Senator Hatch’s web site, Seattle Time online, AIP website, The Hill online).

# Crowdsourcing ....

## ... for Federal Technology Development

SSTI highlights recent examples where federal agencies: have turned to “crowdsourcing as a model to address some of the most pressing problems for both federal agencies and the nation.” [From the article](#), “[T]hrough crowdsourcing, a collaborative method of design, government entities like the Department of Defense's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and NASA hope to create a more innovative, streamlined design-to-production process at a fraction of the cost. Additional agencies have reached out to the crowd through [Challenge.gov](#) — a prize platform that cultivates social problem solving through competitions and prizes. Earlier this month, DARPA announced a new \$1 million challenge to the crowd to design an amphibious armored vehicle for the transport of Marines. The Fast, Adaptable Next-Generation (FANG) challenge will test if crowdsourcing can be an effective means of designing military vehicles and weaponry. It is the latest in a \$300 million series of challenges and prize contest that would use crowdsourcing not only to design military equipment, but also to expedite the modeling and ultimately manufacturing of those technologies. Although crowdsourcing is a highly successful model for the collaborative design of a product, mostly used in the software industry, DARPA officials believe that it can be used effectively in all phases of the design-to-production processes including manufacturing.” (Original Sources: SSTI website)

## ... for Patent Research

Tech companies are turning to crowdsourcing models: to fight patent litigation (and so-called patent trolls). According to [an article in the San Francisco Chronicle](#), “[T]he number of patent actions filed in the United States has tripled to more than 4,000 between 1991 and 2011, according to a PricewaterhouseCoopers study. That's a huge opportunity for Article One [the firm profiled in the article that hires out to crowdsource patent research for its clients], where many of the researchers are engineers, academics and retired patent attorneys looking for a little extra income. The company charges a one-time fee, or in some cases an annual membership, to corporate clients in need of patent research. Article One pays part-timers who come up with the best research between \$3,000 and \$5,000. Last year, Philips hired Article One to probe 33 patents, triple the 2011 number. Microsoft and Sony also are turning to crowdsourced patent research sites including Article One, Patexia and Ask Patents to help combat infringement claims, check for existing patents on products they want to develop, and scrutinize rivals' patents before licensing them. ‘A crowdsourced model works better than any grouping of staff that you bring in-house,’ says Gerard Pannekoek, chief executive officer of startup Intellectual Property Exchange International, which used Article One to check the strength of several patents it plans to license to other companies. Article One, the largest of the sites, has already awarded \$3.69 million to researchers who conducted about 600 patent studies, half of them in 2012.” (Original Sources: San Francisco Chronicle website)

## Spotlight on Colorado: Tech Commercialization (Site of FLC 2013 Annual Meeting)

In the new legislative session that began recently: in Colorado, lawmakers “introduced a bill to increase access to capital for new startup companies in advanced industries aimed at accelerating the tech commercialization process.” As [described by SSTI](#), “[G]ov. John Hickenlooper [in early January] announced the Advanced Industries Accelerator Act, a measure to encourage collaboration between industry, research institutions and federal laboratories, and private-sector funders. It would create a program to provide grants to advanced industries seeking funding for proof-of-concept R&D, early stage capital retention and infrastructure.” The [Daily Camera highlights](#) another Colorado partnership program aimed “at commercializing bioscience technologies and attracting out-of-state investment capital.” (Original Sources: SSTI web site, Daily Camera online)

## AAAS Science and Technology Brief Published

AAAS has just released: the February 2013 issue of [Science and Technology in Congress](#), designed to “provide timely, objective information to Congress on current science and technology issues.” The periodical provides a wealth of information on technology issues from budgets, to bills and hearings, to agency updates, all of interest to the scientific community. (Original Sources: AAAS web site)

## Inauguration Speech and Technology

President Obama’s second inaugural address: has been praised by high-tech executives for including a number of issues important to the technology sector. [From The Hill](#) online, “[P]resident Obama's inaugural address on Monday has so far won positive reviews from the tech community. Trade associations that represent Google, Apple and Cisco said they were encouraged by the themes covered in the president's inaugural address. ‘From innovation to immigration, from the power of technology to transform our society to the power of our imagination to find solutions to long-standing challenges, the President’s inaugural address spoke to the heart of our sector’s shared priorities,’ Tom Gavin, vice president of external affairs at the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI), wrote in a blog post.” (Original Sources: The Hill online)

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**Note:** The DC Dispatch is a periodic update of selected items of interest to the FLC and technology transfer community -- i.e., current legislation, trends, reports, policy and other developments potentially affecting technology transfer or related activities -- designed to keep the community informed of relevant issues on a timely basis. Information is gleaned directly from a variety of sources (newsletters, email alerts, web sites, direct participation at events from the FLC DC Representative’s office, etc.) -- with original sources, contacts and links provided.