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April 30, 2025

Remarks by Coke Morgan Stewart

Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and

Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office

World Intellectual Property Day 2025

Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 4 - 7 p.m. ET

U.S. Capitol Visitor Center, Washington, D.C.

Thank you, Vince, for your thoughtful introduction.

And a big thank you to the AIPLA for leading the charge in hosting this annual celebration.

Thank you to all of the sponsors.

And a special thanks to Senator Tillis and your staff for helping with today's event, and especially for your devotion to promoting the importance of intellectual property protection.

To all the Members of Congress, government officials, and IP professionals in the private sector here today: Without your support of the American IP system, the American economy would be a small fraction of what it is today. Our world's innovators and entrepreneurs, creators and artists, inventors and researchers, would not be able to protect, commercialize, and publicize what they have worked so hard to create.

Patented inventions have completely transformed the composition and distribution of music. The phonograph — patented in 1877 by Thomas Edison — was the first time in history that people could listen to music without attending a live performance. Since then, musical innovation has accelerated. The radio, the Internet, the iPod, and social media have all transformed the way music is distributed globally to billions of people.

Trademarks protect the names of artists, bands, and logos. Elvis, Lady Gaga, Frank Sinatra, and the Grateful Dead have all registered trademarks to protect and monetize their brands. But intellectual property is not just about famous artists and established businesses. Countless up-and-coming artists and small businesses rely on their trademarks for selling everything from songs, to albums, to custom merchandise.

As President Trump stated in his World IP Day Proclamation:

“Our economy is the greatest in the world because we incentivize individuals to dream big, take risks, and make the impossible possible. . . Through the promotion and protection of IP, we are empowering musicians, writers, authors, scientist, and inventors.”

On behalf of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, we are here to support our nation’s inventors and creators in any way we can. We will work with everyone here today to strengthen the IP rights that are necessary to grow our economy.

We thank all of you for your commitment to America’s most important and valuable asset: our intellectual property.

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Event photos

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Dave Pomeroy, musician and AFM International Vice President, performed a song and participated on a panel on the intersection of music and IP. (Photo by Jay Premack/USPTO)



Acting Director of the USPTO Coke Morgan Stewart gives remarks at the 2025 World IP Day Celebration. (Photo by Jay Premack/USPTO)

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