



In the News

Munck Wilson Secures 10 Millionth Patent in USPTO History

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By *Natalie Posgate*

(June 19) – A group of Dallas lawyers from Munck Wilson Mandala made patent history Tuesday by securing a laser detection technology patent for Raytheon. It is the 10 millionth patent to be issued in the U.S. since George Washington issued the first in 1790 to Samuel Hopkins for potash, an ingredient used in fertilizer.

“This will be a fun fact about U.S. patent history that we are a part of and we get to share with our client Raytheon, a true national treasure,” said *William Munck*, who helped Raytheon and inventor Joseph Marron secure the historical patent with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office. “We are excited for Joe and the Raytheon team. This is a marker in U.S. history.”

Others on the Munck Wilson IP team included partners *David Doyle* and *Dan Venglarik*.

Patent 10 million deals with laser detection technology that is vital to improving the abilities of products like autonomous vehicles, medical imaging devices military defense systems and space and undersea exploration.

Doyle explained that Raytheon’s patent increases the capabilities of LADAR systems, which “operate by transmitting laser signals toward a target and processing laser signals reflected from the target.”

The first patent was issued after the 1790 Patent Act was passed, which was adopted after the Founding Fathers called for a patent system in the U.S. Constitution to “promote the progress of science and useful arts” during the Constitutional Convention of 1787. The first patent board comprised Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of War Henry Knox and Attorney General Edmund Randolph.

While it took more than 121 years in the USPTO’s history for the first million patents to be issued, the USPTO issued the same number of patents in a four-year span from 2011 to 2015 (8 million to 9 million).

“Each patent represents countless hours of trial and error, persistence and fortitude from the inventors to bring the idea to fruition,” Doyle said. “The 10 millionth U.S. patent represents a tremendous milestone for both the USPTO and the history of American innovation.”

The first physical location of the USPTO was established in 1810 in the Blodget’s Hotel in Washington, D.C. The U.S. Patent Office was later renamed to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in 1975.

To learn more about the history of patents in the U.S., visit [*this fascinating website*](#) created by the USPTO.

Related People

- David M. Doyle
- William A. Munck
- Daniel E. Venglarik