

Google's Michelle Lee To Get Kicked To The Curb For Being A Google Shill In The U.S. Patent Office

The USPTO must be taking cues from the Trump White House and its love for a daily dose of drama. We just learned from a few well-connected sources (now I sound just like the New York Times) that the new Commerce Secretary, Wilbur Ross, has been quietly interviewing candidates to replace current Director, Michelle Lee, an insider for Google thought by most to be a DNC shill who was placed in the USPTO to protect Google, who has been in and out of the job so many times since January that we stopped keeping score.

Apparently, the leading candidates are still the same individuals that [we reported](#) on a few months ago, i.e. Phil Johnson, former VP IP Strategy at J&J, and former [IPO](#) president, as well as former Chief justice of the Federal Circuit, Randall Rader. Both are well regarded in the IP community and proponents of a strong patent system to support innovations and investment. Each would be a breath of fresh air to an agency that has gone from a patent issuing to a patent killing machine over the last years. Invalidation rates still hover at 70%+ for patents challenged via the PTAB. We will keep you posted as this story unfolds, but this is undoubtedly a positive development if you are an inventor or patent owner. It also comes on the heels of an [announcement](#) a few days earlier that Director Lee was forming a “working group” on regulatory reform. Under a

new director, this group could now become a conduit to seriously revisit the entire post-grant review (like IPRs) mess that the America Invents Act has created.