

Silicon Valley patent office shelved

September 1 2013, by Martha Mendoza

Silicon Valley's high tech firms are fighting what they consider a deeply personal federal cut this summer that shelves a planned patent office in this innovation-fueled region.

While most of the country is feeling some pinch from the automatic budget cuts known as sequestration, tech leaders say this one is unique and unfair, because the Commerce Department's promised satellite patent offices were never going to be funded by taxpayers.

Instead, they're supported by the \$2.8 billion in annual patent fees.

Emily Lam at the Silicon Valley Leadership Group says the decision "makes absolutely no sense." But U.S. Patent and Trademark Office chief financial officer Tony Scardino says the government's across-the-board austerity policy doesn't make exceptions for fee-supported programs.

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