

Enrolled Senate Bill 1540

Sponsored by Senator WINTERS, Representative WILLIAMSON; Senators BOQUIST, CLOSE, DEVLIN, EDWARDS, FERRIOLI, GIROD, HANSELL, JOHNSON, KNOPP, MONROE, PROZANSKI, ROBLAN, STEINER HAYWARD, THOMSEN, WHITSETT, Representatives BARKER, BERGER, BUCKLEY, CAMERON, DOHERTY, FREDERICK, GALLEGOS, GELSER, GORSEK, KENY-GUYER, NATHANSON, PARRISH, READ, THATCHER, VEGA PEDERSON, WEIDNER, WITT (Presession filed.)

CHAPTER

AN ACT

Relating to bad-faith assertions of patent infringement; creating new provisions; amending ORS 646.608; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. Section 2 of this 2014 Act is added to and made a part of ORS 646.605 to 646.652.

SECTION 2. (1) As used in this section:

(a) "Affiliate" means a person that directly, or indirectly through one or more intermediaries, controls, is controlled by or is under common control with another person.

(b) "Complaint" means a document or a copy of a document that a person or the person's affiliate:

(A) Files with a court, an arbitration panel or another body with power to adjudicate a dispute over patent rights; and

(B) Serves, sends or otherwise communicates to a recipient in order to commence a judicial, arbitration or administrative proceeding for patent infringement against the recipient.

(c) "Demand" means an oral or written communication that alleges, asserts or claims that a recipient has infringed or has contributed to infringing a patent or the rights that a patentee has under a patent or has granted to an assignee or a licensee.

(d) "Patentee" has the meaning given that term in 35 U.S.C. 100, as in effect on the effective date of this 2014 Act.

(e) "Recipient" means a person that receives a demand and:

(A) Resides in this state;

(B) Maintains a place of business or transacts business within this state; or

(C) Is a body, officer or agency acting under the statutory authority of this state or under the legal authority of a political subdivision of this state.

(2) A person or the person's affiliate may not communicate a demand, or cause another person to communicate a demand, to a recipient if in the demand the person or the person's affiliate alleges, asserts or claims in bad faith that the recipient has infringed or contributed to infringing a patent or the rights that a patentee has, or has granted to an assignee or licensee, under the patent.

(3) If a prosecuting attorney receives one or more accusations from a recipient or recipients that a person or the person's affiliate has violated subsection (2) of this section, the prosecuting attorney may execute and serve an investigative demand on the person or the person's affiliate under ORS 646.618 and may take action against the person or the person's affiliate under ORS 646.632 for engaging in an unlawful trade practice.

(4) A court may consider one or more of the following conditions as evidence that a person or the person's affiliate has, in bad faith, alleged, asserted or claimed an infringement of a patent or rights that a patentee, assignee or licensee has under a patent:

(a) The demand required the recipient to respond or to pay a license or other fee within a period of time that a reasonable person would consider to be unreasonably short.

(b) The demand did not include:

(A) The patent number for the patent that the person or the person's affiliate alleges, asserts or claims that the recipient infringed;

(B) Current and accurate contact information for the patentee, assignee or licensee, including a name, address and phone number or other contact information that would enable the recipient to identify and communicate with the patentee, assignee or licensee; and

(C) A statement of facts, together with an explanation or a description of the facts that would enable a reasonable person to understand the basis of the allegation or claim that the recipient has infringed the patent or the rights of the patentee, assignee or licensee under the patent.

(c) The person or the person's affiliate failed to provide the information described in paragraph (b) of this subsection to the recipient within a reasonable time after the recipient requested the information.

(d) The person or the person's affiliate, before communicating the demand:

(A) Failed to compare the claims in the patent to the features or specifications of the recipient's product, service or technology that the person or the person's affiliate alleges, asserts or claims is an infringement of the patent or the rights of the patentee, assignee or licensee under the patent; or

(B) Conducted the comparison described in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph, but in a way that did not enable the person or the person's affiliate to specifically identify the infringing features or specifications of the recipient's product, service or technology.

(e) The person or the person's affiliate offered to license the patent for an amount that a reasonable person with knowledge of the market value of a license for the invention that is covered by the patent would consider unreasonable.

(f) The person or the person's affiliate knew or should have known at the time the person or the person's affiliate communicated the demand that the allegation, assertion or claim of infringement was without merit or was deceptive.

(g) The person or the person's affiliate previously communicated a demand or filed a complaint based on the same or a similar allegation, assertion or claim and:

(A) The demand did not include the information described in paragraph (b) of this subsection; or

(B) A court, an arbitration panel or another body with power to adjudicate a patent dispute dismissed the complaint as frivolous or without merit at any point during a proceeding before the court, the panel or the body.

(h) The person or the person's affiliate engaged in other conduct that the Attorney General by rule identifies as evidence of alleging, asserting or claiming an infringement in bad faith.

(5) A court may consider one or more of the following conditions as evidence that a person or the person's affiliate has, in good faith, alleged, asserted or claimed an infringement of a patent or rights that a patentee, assignee or licensee has under a patent:

(a) The demand does include the information described in subsection (4)(b) of this section.

(b) The person or the person's affiliate provided the information described in subsection (4)(b) of this section to the recipient within a reasonable time after the recipient requested the information, if the demand did not include the information.

(c) The person or the person's affiliate, before communicating the demand, attempted to establish that an infringement had occurred by comparing the claims in the patent to the features or specifications of the recipient's product, service or technology that the person or the person's affiliate believes is an infringement of the patent, or the rights of the patentee, assignee or licensee under the patent, and specifically identifying the infringing features or specifications of the recipient's product, service or technology.

(d) The person or the person's affiliate, after conducting the comparison described in paragraph (c) of this subsection, attempted in good faith to negotiate a settlement or a license for the patent with the recipient.

(e) The person or the person's affiliate has made a substantial investment in using or prosecuting the patent or in producing or selling a product, service or technology covered by the patent.

(f) The person or the person's affiliate is:

(A) Named in the patent as an inventor or an assignee of the inventor;

(B) An institution of higher education; or

(C) An organization that an institution of higher education owns or is affiliated with and that has as the organization's principal purpose the transfer of technology from the institute of higher education.

(g) The person or the person's affiliate has:

(A) Previously and successfully enforced the patent, or the rights the patentee, an affiliate or a licensee has under the patent, before a court, an arbitration panel or another body with power to adjudicate a patent dispute; and

(B) Otherwise demonstrated integrity and good faith in business practices related to the patent or previous attempts to enforce the patent or the rights the patentee, an assignee or a licensee has under the patent.

(h) The person or the person's affiliate engaged in other conduct that the Attorney General by rule identifies as evidence of alleging, asserting or claiming an infringement in good faith.

(6) A violation of subsection (2) of this section is an unlawful practice under ORS 646.608 that is subject to an action under ORS 646.638. Notwithstanding the definition of "person" in ORS 646.605, a recipient is a person for the purpose of bringing an action as a plaintiff under ORS 646.638.

(7) This section does not limit or affect:

(a) A right that this state, a political subdivision of this state, an agency, officer, employee or agent of this state or a political subdivision of this state or any other person may have with respect to a patent or rights granted under a patent; or

(b) Any remedy for patent infringement that a court, an arbitration panel or another body with power to adjudicate a dispute over patent rights may grant to this state, a political subdivision of this state or an agency, officer, employee or agent of this state or a political subdivision of this state or any other person.

(8) The Attorney General may adopt rules necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

SECTION 3. ORS 646.608 is amended to read:

646.608. (1) A person engages in an unlawful practice if in the course of the person's business, vocation or occupation the person does any of the following:

(a) Passes off real estate, goods or services as the real estate, goods or services of another.

(b) Causes likelihood of confusion or of misunderstanding as to the source, sponsorship, approval, or certification of real estate, goods or services.

(c) Causes likelihood of confusion or of misunderstanding as to affiliation, connection, or association with, or certification by, another.

(d) Uses deceptive representations or designations of geographic origin in connection with real estate, goods or services.

(e) Represents that real estate, goods or services have sponsorship, approval, characteristics, ingredients, uses, benefits, quantities or qualities that the real estate, goods or services do not have or that a person has a sponsorship, approval, status, qualification, affiliation, or connection that the person does not have.

(f) Represents that real estate or goods are original or new if the real estate or goods are deteriorated, altered, reconditioned, reclaimed, used or secondhand.

(g) Represents that real estate, goods or services are of a particular standard, quality, or grade, or that real estate or goods are of a particular style or model, if the real estate, goods or services are of another.

(h) Disparages the real estate, goods, services, property or business of a customer or another by false or misleading representations of fact.

(i) Advertises real estate, goods or services with intent not to provide the real estate, goods or services as advertised, or with intent not to supply reasonably expectable public demand, unless the advertisement discloses a limitation of quantity.

(j) Makes false or misleading representations of fact concerning the reasons for, existence of, or amounts of price reductions.

(k) Makes false or misleading representations concerning credit availability or the nature of the transaction or obligation incurred.

(L) Makes false or misleading representations relating to commissions or other compensation to be paid in exchange for permitting real estate, goods or services to be used for model or demonstration purposes or in exchange for submitting names of potential customers.

(m) Performs service on or dismantles any goods or real estate if the owner or apparent owner of the goods or real estate does not authorize the service or dismantling.

(n) Solicits potential customers by telephone or door to door as a seller unless the person provides the information required under ORS 646.611.

(o) In a sale, rental or other disposition of real estate, goods or services, gives or offers to give a rebate or discount or otherwise pays or offers to pay value to the customer in consideration of the customer giving to the person the names of prospective purchasers, lessees, or borrowers, or otherwise aiding the person in making a sale, lease, or loan to another person, if earning the rebate, discount or other value is contingent upon an event occurring after the time the customer enters into the transaction.

(p) Makes any false or misleading statement about a prize, contest or promotion used to publicize a product, business or service.

(q) Promises to deliver real estate, goods or services within a certain period of time with intent not to deliver the real estate, goods or services as promised.

(r) Organizes or induces or attempts to induce membership in a pyramid club.

(s) Makes false or misleading representations of fact concerning the offering price of, or the person's cost for real estate, goods or services.

(t) Concurrent with tender or delivery of any real estate, goods or services fails to disclose any known material defect or material nonconformity.

(u) Engages in any other unfair or deceptive conduct in trade or commerce.

(v) Violates any of the provisions relating to auction sales, consignment sales, auctioneers, consignees or auction marts under ORS 698.640, whether in a commercial or noncommercial situation.

(w) Manufactures mercury fever thermometers.

(x) Sells or supplies mercury fever thermometers unless the thermometer is required by federal law, or is:

(A) Prescribed by a person licensed under ORS chapter 677; and

(B) Supplied with instructions on the careful handling of the thermometer to avoid breakage and on the proper cleanup of mercury should breakage occur.

(y) Sells a thermostat that contains mercury unless the thermostat is labeled in a manner to inform the purchaser that mercury is present in the thermostat and that the thermostat may not be disposed of until the mercury is removed, reused, recycled or otherwise managed to ensure that the mercury does not become part of the solid waste stream or wastewater. For purposes of this paragraph, "thermostat" means a device commonly used to sense and, through electrical communication with heating, cooling or ventilation equipment, control room temperature.

(z) Sells or offers for sale a motor vehicle manufactured after January 1, 2006, that contains mercury light switches.

(aa) Violates the provisions of ORS 803.375, 803.385 or 815.410 to 815.430.

(bb) Violates ORS 646A.070 (1).

(cc) Violates any requirement of ORS 646A.030 to 646A.040.

(dd) Violates the provisions of ORS 128.801 to 128.898.

(ee) Violates ORS 646.883 or 646.885.

(ff) Violates ORS 646.569.

(gg) Violates the provisions of ORS 646A.142.

(hh) Violates ORS 646A.360.

(ii) Violates ORS 646.553 or 646.557 or any rule adopted pursuant thereto.

(jj) Violates ORS 646.563.

(kk) Violates ORS 759.690 or any rule adopted pursuant thereto.

(LL) Violates the provisions of ORS 759.705, 759.710 and 759.720 or any rule adopted pursuant thereto.

(mm) Violates ORS 646A.210 or 646A.214.

(nn) Violates any provision of ORS 646A.124 to 646A.134.

(oo) Violates ORS 646A.095.

(pp) Violates ORS 822.046.

(qq) Violates ORS 128.001.

(rr) Violates ORS 646A.800 (2) to (4).

(ss) Violates ORS 646A.090 (2) to (4).

(tt) Violates ORS 87.686.

(uu) Violates ORS 646A.803.

(vv) Violates ORS 646A.362.

(ww) Violates ORS 646A.052 or any rule adopted under ORS 646A.052 or 646A.054.

(xx) Violates ORS 180.440 (1) or 180.486 (1).

(yy) Commits the offense of acting as a vehicle dealer without a certificate under ORS 822.005.

(zz) Violates ORS 87.007 (2) or (3).

(aaa) Violates ORS 92.405 (1), (2) or (3).

(bbb) Engages in an unlawful practice under ORS 646.648.

(ccc) Violates ORS 646A.365.

(ddd) Violates ORS 98.854 or 98.858 or a rule adopted under ORS 98.864.

(eee) Sells a gift card in violation of ORS 646A.276.

(fff) Violates ORS 646A.102, 646A.106 or 646A.108.

(ggg) Violates ORS 646A.430 to 646A.450.

(hhh) Violates a provision of ORS 744.318 to 744.384.

(iii) Violates a provision of ORS 646A.702 to 646A.720.

(jii) Violates ORS 646A.530 30 or more days after a recall notice, warning or declaration described in ORS 646A.530 is issued for the children's product, as defined in ORS 646A.525, that is the subject of the violation.

(kkk) Violates a provision of ORS 697.612, 697.642, 697.652, 697.662, 697.682, 697.692 or 697.707.

(LLL) Violates the consumer protection provisions of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. App. 501 et seq., as in effect on January 1, 2010.

(mmm) Violates a provision of ORS 646A.480 to 646A.495.

(nnn) Violates ORS 646A.082.

(ooo) Violates ORS 646.647.

(ppp) Violates ORS 646A.115.

(qqq) Violates a provision of ORS 646A.405.

(rrr) Violates ORS 646A.092.

(sss) Violates a provision of ORS 646.644.

(ttt) Violates a provision of ORS 646A.295.

(uuu) Violates ORS 646A.564.

(vvv) Engages in the business of, or acts in the capacity of, an immigration consultant, as defined in ORS 9.280, in this state and for compensation, unless federal law authorizes the person to do so or unless the person is an active member of the Oregon State Bar.

(www) Violates ORS 702.012, 702.029, 702.032 or 702.054.

(xxx) Violates ORS 646A.806.

(yyy) Violates section 2 (2) of this 2014 Act.

(2) A representation under subsection (1) of this section or ORS 646.607 may be any manifestation of any assertion by words or conduct, including, but not limited to, a failure to disclose a fact.

(3) In order to prevail in an action or suit under ORS 646.605 to 646.652, a prosecuting attorney need not prove competition between the parties or actual confusion or misunderstanding.

(4) An action or suit may not be brought under subsection (1)(u) of this section unless the Attorney General has first established a rule in accordance with the provisions of ORS chapter 183 declaring the conduct to be unfair or deceptive in trade or commerce.

(5) Notwithstanding any other provision of ORS 646.605 to 646.652, if an action or suit is brought under subsection (1)(xx) of this section by a person other than a prosecuting attorney, relief is limited to an injunction and the prevailing party may be awarded reasonable attorney fees.

SECTION 4. (1) Section 2 of this 2014 Act and the amendments to ORS 646.608 by section 3 of this 2014 Act become operative 91 days after the effective date of this 2014 Act.

(2) The Attorney General may take any action before the operative date specified in subsection (1) of this section that is necessary to enable the Attorney General, on and after the operative date specified in subsection (1) of this section, to exercise all of the duties, functions and powers conferred on the Attorney General by section 2 of this 2014 Act and the amendments to ORS 646.608 by section 3 of this 2014 Act.

SECTION 5. This 2014 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2014 Act takes effect on its passage.

Passed by Senate February 14, 2014

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Robert Taylor, Secretary of Senate

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Peter Courtney, President of Senate

Passed by House February 24, 2014

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Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Received by Governor:

.....M,....., 2014

Approved:

.....M,....., 2014

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John Kitzhaber, Governor

Filed in Office of Secretary of State:

.....M,....., 2014

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Kate Brown, Secretary of State