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How the Trump Administration Will Impact the Technology Industry

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IN THE
Supreme Court of the United States

TC HEARTLAND LLC,

Petitioner,

v.

KRAFT FOOD BRANDS GROUP LLC,

Respondent.

**On Writ Of Certiorari To The
United States Court Of Appeals
For The Federal Circuit**

**BRIEF OF THE SOFTWARE & INFORMATION
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION AS *AMICUS
CURIAE* IN SUPPORT OF PETITIONER**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTEREST OF <i>AMICUS CURIAE</i>	1
SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT	2
ARGUMENT	5
I. This Court’s Settled Interpretation Of The Patent Venue Statute Controls This Case.....	5
A. This Court Conclusively Interpreted The Patent Venue Statute In <i>Fourco</i>	6
B. The Federal Circuit Departed From This Court’s Interpretation Based On A Non-Substantive Change That, In Any Event, Congress Has Since Repealed.....	9
1. The Federal Circuit Misread A Minor 1988 Amendment As Upending The Law Of Patent Venue.....	9
2. The 2011 Amendment Restored The Language Interpreted In <i>Fourco</i>	11
3. Congress Specifically Limited Section 1391(c)’s Applicability.....	13
C. This Court’s Interpretation Of Patent Venue Warrants <i>Stare Decisis</i> Treatment.	14
II. The Unseemly Forum Shopping Permitted Under The Federal Circuit’s Construction Of The Statute Is A Significant Drag On Innovation.	17
A. The Federal Circuit’s Loose Venue Standard Has Generated Rampant And Unseemly Forum Shopping.....	19

TABLE OF CONTENTS *(continued)*

	<u>Page</u>
1. VE Holding Has Rendered Patent Litigation Dysfunctional.....	19
2. Motions To Transfer For Convenience Have Not Solved The Problem.	25
B. Forum Shopping Is The Root Of Many Problems In Patent Law.	27
CONCLUSION	33

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Page(s)

Cases

<i>Alice Corp. Pty. Ltd. v. CLS Bank Int’l</i> , 134 S. Ct. 2347 (2014).....	28
<i>Andrews v. Hovey</i> , 124 U.S. 694 (1888).....	17
<i>Avocent Huntsville Corp. v. Aten Int’l Co.</i> , 552 F.3d 1324 (Fed. Cir. 2008)	20
<i>Beverly Hills Fan Co. v. Royal Sovereign Corp.</i> , 21 F.3d 1558 (Fed. Cir. 1994)	20
<i>Bloate v. United States</i> , 559 U.S. 196 (2010).....	7
<i>Brunette Mach. Works, Ltd. v. Kockum Indus., Inc.</i> , 406 U.S. 706 (1972).....	13, 15
<i>Chisom v. Roemer</i> , 501 U.S. 380 (1991).....	10
<i>Cuozzo Speed Techs., LLC v. Lee</i> , 136 S. Ct. 2131 (2016).....	29
<i>D. Ginsberg & Sons, Inc. v. Popkin</i> , 285 U.S. 204 (1932).....	7

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES *(continued)***Page(s)**

<i>Fourco Glass Co. v. Transmirra Products Corp.</i> , 353 U.S. 222 (1957)	2, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 21, 33
<i>In re Google Inc.</i> , No. 2015-138, 2015 WL 5294800 (Fed. Cir. July 16, 2015).....	27
<i>Halo Elecs., Inc. v. Pulse Elecs., Inc.</i> , 136 S. Ct. 1923 (2016).....	22, 31
<i>Hertz Corp. v. Friend</i> , 559 U.S. 77 (2010).....	15
<i>John R. Sand & Gravel Co. v. United States</i> , 552 U.S. 130 (2008).....	14
<i>Kellogg Brown & Root Servs., Inc. v. United States</i> , 135 S. Ct. 1970 (2015).....	10
<i>Kimble v. Marvel Entm't, LLC</i> , 135 S. Ct. 2401 (2015).....	3, 14, 15, 17
<i>Patterson v. McLean Credit Union</i> , 491 U.S. 164 (1989).....	15
<i>Planned Parenthood of Se. Penn. v. Casey</i> , 505 U.S. 833 (1992).....	18
<i>Polar Electro Oy v. Suunto Oy</i> , 829 F.3d 1343 (Fed. Cir. 2016)	19

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES (*continued*)**Page(s)**

<i>Roberts v. Sea-Land Servs., Inc.</i> , 132 S. Ct. 1350 (2012).....	16
<i>Shaw v. Quincy Mining Co.</i> , 145 U.S. 444 (1892).....	8
<i>Stonite Prods. Co. v. Melvin Lloyd Co.</i> , 315 U.S. 561 (1942).....	6
<i>Train v. City of New York</i> , 420 U.S. 35 (1975).....	12
<i>TRW Inc. v. Andrews</i> , 534 U.S. 19 (2001).....	16
<i>In re TS Tech USA Corp.</i> , 551 F.3d 1315 (Fed. Cir. 2008)	26, 27
<i>United Sav. Ass’n of Tex. v. Timbers of Inwood Forest Assocs.</i> , 484 U.S. 365 (1988).....	10
<i>VE Holding Corp. v. Johnson Gas Appliance Co.</i> , 917 F.2d 1574 (Fed. Cir. 1990)	2, 9, 12, 14, 19
<i>Whitman v. Am. Trucking Ass’ns, Inc.</i> , 531 U.S. 457 (2001).....	10
<i>In re Zimmer Holdings, Inc.</i> , 609 F.3d 1378 (Fed. Cir. 2010)	26

Statutes

28 U.S.C. § 48	6
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TABLE OF AUTHORITIES *(continued)*

	<u>Page(s)</u>
28 U.S.C. § 1332(c)(1).....	15
28 U.S.C. § 1391(a).....	3, 14
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28 U.S.C. § 1391(c)(2).....	11, 19
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INTEREST OF *AMICUS CURIAE*¹

Amicus curiae Software & Information Industry Association (“SIIA”) is the principal trade association for the software and digital information industries. The 700-plus software companies, search engine providers, data and analytics firms, information service companies, and digital publishers that constitute SIIA’s membership serve nearly every segment of society, including business, education, government, healthcare, and consumers.

SIIA’s members regularly are targeted by made-for-litigation entities who assert infringement of patents they do not practice. Such non-practicing entities, who may exist on paper only and typically have few or no employees to inconvenience, generally file their lawsuits in hand-picked district courts with well-established reputations for imposing procedures and delivering outcomes favorable to patent holders, and which have no connection to the dispute beyond the fact that a nationally distributed product was sold or used there.

Amicus has substantial interests in restoring the statutory limits on patent venue, redressing the forum shopping that has infected patent litigation in recent years, and ensuring that the balance struck by Congress in 28 U.S.C. § 1400(b) is respected.

¹ Pursuant to Supreme Court Rule 37.6, counsel for *amicus curiae* states that no counsel for a party authored any portion of this brief, and no person other than *amicus curiae* or its counsel or members made any monetary contribution intended to fund the preparation or submission of the brief. All parties have consented to the filing of this brief.

SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

Sixty years ago, in *Fourco Glass Co. v. Transmirra Products Corp.*, 353 U.S. 222 (1957), this Court answered the very question presented here: “whether 28 U.S.C. § 1400(b) is the sole and exclusive provision governing venue in patent infringement actions, or whether that section is supplemented by 28 U.S.C. § 1391(c).” *Id.* at 222. The pertinent provisions of both the specific patent venue statute and the general venue provision in effect today are materially identical to those in effect in *Fourco*. Accordingly, this Court should reaffirm *Fourco* and reverse the decision below.

I. The Court should adhere to *Fourco*’s settled interpretation.

A. *Fourco* held that Section 1400(b) stands alone and permits patent-infringement suits against corporations only where they are incorporated or have a regular and established place of business and committed acts of infringement. 353 U.S. at 226, 229.

B. In 1990, the Federal Circuit distinguished *Fourco* on the basis of a 1988 amendment, which changed Section 1391(c)’s stated sphere of applicability from “for venue purposes” to “[f]or purposes of venue under this chapter.” *VE Holding Corp. v. Johnson Gas Appliance Co.*, 917 F.2d 1574, 1579 (Fed. Cir. 1990). The court of appeals rejected *Fourco* based on this minor modification, arguing that the change entitled it to interpret the statute “as a matter of first impression.” That decision was incorrect. Nothing in the text or history of the 1988 amendment even remotely suggested that Congress intended to end the

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