



111 N. MARKET STREET  
SUITE 300  
SAN JOSE, CA 95113  
408|981-4293  
PAYNE@BOBPAYNE.COM

## **The Dude Abides**

By Robert Payne  
03/21/2008

This here's the story about the Dude. This ain't no ordinary story. But then, the Dude ain't no ordinary man. Folks not from these parts call him John Dudas, Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

But we all call him the Dude. Although, I hear he don't mind "His Dudeness," and some call him "El Duderino," if they're not into the whole brevity thing.

What makes his story special is patent reform. Seems like those fellers and ladies in Washington thought it'd be a good idea to change all the rules. First hombre to get to the Patent Office wins. Appeals made before a case is over. Hearings on oppositions to issued patents. Not messin' with Texas. Cuttin' down damages. The Dude said some of this was good, but some was bad. But them Washington folks didn't listen. Passed the House and went to the Senate, quicker'n you can spit on an armadillo.

The Dude didn't like it one bit. Darkness washed over him, darker'n a black steer's tookus on a moonless prairie night. But the Dude put up with all that. He didn't say much at first. He waited 'till the time was right. One thing you gotta say, the Dude abides.

Sure 'nuff, November comes and goes, then December-January-February. Nothin' happens. No Senate vote; no debate. Maybe they were "out of their element" and afraid to vote, or maybe they just don't believe in patents. You know, just a bunch of patent nihilists. In any event, certain things came to light. The Senate bill has a lot of ins, outs and what-have-you's. Groups wrote letters. And when the time seemed right, the Dude testified. He told 'em even the White House opposed the bill.

So, now time's runnin' short. No one knows if them Washington folks'll vote, 'fore they head home for good. 'Course, you gotta admit, they've got a lot of other grub on their plate to take care of. Like observin' the 85th anniversary of the "founding of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association" (S.Con. Res. 14), and makin' March 1 "Sibling's Connection Day" (Senate Res. 86), and such. Must be pretty important stuff to some folks. But the Dude don't mind waitin' for what's important to him. Like I said, the Dude abides.