

Nos. 20-2047, 20-2049

IN THE
United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit

CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.,

Appellant,

v.

RAMOT AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY LTD.,

Appellee.

Appeal from the United States Patent and Trademark Office,
Patent Trial and Appeal Board in
Nos. IPR2020-00122 and IPR2020-00123

**CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.'S
RESPONSE TO ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE**

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**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FEDERAL CIRCUIT**

CERTIFICATE OF INTEREST

Case Number 2020-2047, 2020-2049
Short Case Caption Cisco Systems Inc. v. Ramot at Tel Aviv University Ltd.
Filing Party/Entity Cisco Systems Inc.

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Name: Mark S. Davies

<p>1. Represented Entities. Fed. Cir. R. 47.4(a)(1).</p>	<p>2. Real Party in Interest. Fed. Cir. R. 47.4(a)(2).</p>	<p>3. Parent Corporations and Stockholders. Fed. Cir. R. 47.4(a)(3).</p>
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<p>Cisco Systems Inc.</p>		

Additional pages attached

4. Legal Representatives. List all law firms, partners, and associates that (a) appeared for the entities in the originating court or agency or (b) are expected to appear in this court for the entities. Do not include those who have already entered an appearance in this court. Fed. Cir. R. 47.4(a)(4).

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5. Related Cases. Provide the case titles and numbers of any case known to be pending in this court or any other court or agency that will directly affect or be directly affected by this court’s decision in the pending appeal. Do not include the originating case number(s) for this case. Fed. Cir. R. 47.4(a)(5). See also Fed. Cir. R. 47.5(b).

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Ramot at Tel Aviv University Ltd. v. Cisco Systems, Inc., 2:19-cv-00225-JRG (E.D. Tex)		
In re Cisco Systems, Inc., No. 20-148 (Fed. Cir.)		

6. Organizational Victims and Bankruptcy Cases. Provide any information required under Fed. R. App. P. 26.1(b) (organizational victims in criminal cases) and 26.1(c) (bankruptcy case debtors and trustees). Fed. Cir. R. 47.4(a)(6).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CERTIFICATE OF INTEREST	i
TABLE OF AUTHORITIES	v
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	4
Congress creates IPR to provide an efficient and expert avenue for defendants challenging patent validity	4
The PTAB begins improperly using precedential decisions to restrict institution of petitions filed by defendants.....	5
Cisco is denied IPR institution based on the <i>NHK/Fintiv</i> rule.....	7
ARGUMENT	10
I. This Court Has Jurisdiction.	10
A. Section 314(d) does not bar these appeals.....	11
B. Section 1295(a)(4)(A) confers jurisdiction over these appeals, and § 319 does not withdraw it.	20
C. If this court doubts its appellate jurisdiction, it should treat Cisco’s appeals as alternatively seeking mandamus.	23
II. The Court Should Not Dismiss These Appeals Without Full Briefing.	24
CONCLUSION	26
ADDENDUM	
CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE	

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

	Page(s)
Cases	
<i>Arthrex, Inc. v. Smith & Nephew, Inc.</i> , 880 F.3d 1345 (Fed. Cir. 2018)	20, 21, 24, 26
<i>Copelands' Enters., Inc. v. CNV, Inc.</i> , 887 F.2d 1065 (Fed. Cir. 1989)	20
<i>In re Cuozzo Speed Techs., LLC</i> , 793 F.3d 1268 (Fed. Cir. 2015)	24
<i>Cuozzo Speed Techs., LLC v. Lee</i> , 136 S. Ct. 2131 (2016).....	3, 10, 12, 13, 15, 18, 22, 24, 25
<i>ESIP Series 2, LLC v. Puzhen Life USA, LLC</i> , 958 F.3d 1378 (Fed. Cir. 2020)	12
<i>JEM Broad. Co. v. FCC</i> , 22 F.3d 320 (D.C. Cir. 1994)	14
<i>NFC Tech. LLC v. HTC Am., Inc.</i> , 2015 WL 1069111 (E.D. Tex. Mar. 11, 2015)	5
<i>Nobel Biocare Servs. AG v. Intradent USA, Inc.</i> , 903 F.3d 1365 (Fed. Cir. 2018)	26
<i>Petrella v. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.</i> , 572 U.S. 663 (2014).....	17
<i>In re Power Integrations, Inc.</i> , 899 F.3d 1316 (Fed. Cir. 2018)	12
<i>PPC Broadband, Inc. v. Corning Optical Commc'ns RF, LLC</i> , 815 F.3d 734 (Fed. Cir. 2016)	16
<i>Ramot at Tel Aviv Univ. Ltd. v. Cisco Sys., Inc.</i> , No. 2-19-cv-00225 (E.D. Tex.)	8

<i>SAS Inst. Inc. v. Iancu</i> , 138 S. Ct. 1348 (2018).....	4, 10, 12, 13, 15, 24
<i>Sierra Club v. Jackson</i> , 648 F.3d 848 (D.C. Cir. 2011)	22
<i>St. Jude Med., Cardiology Div., Inc. v. Volcano Corp.</i> , 749 F.3d 1373 (Fed. Cir. 2014)	10, 12, 24
<i>Thryv, Inc. v. Click-To-Call Techs., LP</i> , 140 S. Ct. 1367 (2020).....	3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25
<i>Tokyo Kikai Seisakusho, Ltd. v. United States</i> , 529 F.3d 1352 (Fed. Cir. 2008)	23
<i>U.S. Telecom Ass’n v. FCC</i> , 400 F.3d 29 (D.C. Cir. 2005)	14
<i>Uniloc 2017 LLC v. Hulu, LLC</i> , 966 F.3d 1295 (Fed. Cir. 2020)	25
<i>Utility Air Regulatory Grp. v. EPA</i> , 573 U.S. 302 (2014).....	23
<i>Versata Dev. Grp., Inc. v. SAP Am., Inc.</i> , 793 F.3d 1306 (Fed. Cir. 2015)	25
<i>Wi-Fi One, LLC v. Broadcom Corp.</i> , 878 F.3d 1364 (Fed. Cir. 2018)	24

Statutes

5 U.S.C. § 701(a)(2)	22
5 U.S.C. § 704	19
5 U.S.C. § 706(2)(A)	15
28 U.S.C. § 1295(a)(4)(A).....	2, 10, 20, 21, 23
28 U.S.C. § 1651	23
35 U.S.C. § 2	14

35 U.S.C. § 102	13
35 U.S.C. § 103	13
35 U.S.C. § 112	13
35 U.S.C. § 141	21
35 U.S.C. § 311	13
35 U.S.C. § 312	12
35 U.S.C. § 314	<i>passim</i>
35 U.S.C. § 315	5, 12, 16, 17
35 U.S.C. § 316	14, 15
35 U.S.C. § 318	13, 21
35 U.S.C. § 319	10, 20, 21, 23, 24
35 U.S.C. § 325	16

Legislative Materials

H.R. Rep. No. 112-98 (2011).....	4
----------------------------------	---

Administrative Decisions

<i>Apple Inc. v. Fintiv, Inc.</i> , IPR2020-00019, Paper 11 (PTAB Mar. 20, 2020)	6
<i>Apple Inc. v. Maxell, Ltd.</i> , IPR2020-00203, Paper 12 (PTAB July 6, 2020)	7
<i>Intel Corp. v. VLSI Tech. LLC</i> , IPR2020-00158, Paper 16 (PTAB May 20, 2020)	7
<i>NHK Spring Co. v. Intri-Plex Techs., Inc.</i> , IPR2018-00752, Paper 8 (PTAB Sept. 12, 2018)	6

Supercell Oy v. Gree, Inc.,
IPR2020-00215, Paper 10 (PTAB June 10, 2020) 7

Vizio, Inc. v. Polaris PowerLED Techs., LLC,
IPR2020-00043, Paper 30 (PTAB May 4, 2020) 7

Other Authorities

Sasha Moss et al., *Inter Partes Review as a Means to Improve Patent Quality*, 46 R Street Shorts 1 (2017),
<https://tinyurl.com/yya2n86u> 5

Precedential and Informative Decisions, USPTO,
<https://tinyurl.com/y2ja3c7r> (last visited Aug. 26, 2020) 7

David Ruschke & Scott R. Boalick *PTAB Update*, USPTO
(2017), <https://tinyurl.com/y7c2nxqq> 5

Standard Operating Procedure 2, USPTO (Rev. 10 2018),
<https://perma.cc/PY6P-FGSD> 7

INTRODUCTION

In the America Invents Act (“AIA”), Congress created inter partes review (“IPR”) to give district court defendants accused of patent infringement an alternative, expert forum for adjudicating the validity of patent claims asserted against them. Congress worried that the costs of district court litigation were too high, and that as a result, defendants accused of infringing questionable patents were settling, rather than fighting to get those patents declared invalid. So it created IPR to provide those defendants a new avenue for challenging patents before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (“USPTO”). Specifically, Congress determined that if a district court defendant filed for IPR within one year of being served with a complaint, and met other institution conditions set by statute—as well as any others that the USPTO added through regulation—IPR would be available to it.

Here, however, the Patent Trial and Appeal Board (“Board” or “PTAB”) refused to institute IPR on the ground that Petitioner Cisco Systems, Inc. (“Cisco”) was challenging patent claims that are at issue in a parallel district court infringement action that may go to trial before the Board could issue a final written decision. That rule—the

“*NHK/Fintiv* rule”—is flatly inconsistent with the AIA in at least two ways. First, because the *NHK/Fintiv* rule is a substantive rule—and, specifically, a new institution standard—both the Administrative Procedure Act (“APA”) and the AIA itself required the agency to promulgate it by notice-and-comment rulemaking, which the agency failed to do. Second, the *NHK/Fintiv* rule contravenes Congress’s deliberate judgment that district court defendants should be able to pursue IPR alongside the infringement action, so long as they petition for IPR within one year (as Cisco did). The Board’s denial of Cisco’s petitions, which rested on the *NHK/Fintiv* rule, is thus unlawful.

The present issue is whether the Court has jurisdiction to review these arguments. It does. Congress conferred on this Court authority to hear appeals from PTAB “decision[s] ... with respect to ... inter partes review.” 28 U.S.C. § 1295(a)(4)(A). And nothing in 35 U.S.C. § 314(d) withdraws that grant of jurisdiction as to challenges like Cisco’s. As the Supreme Court has made clear, § 314(d) permits appeals of institution decisions that challenge actions by the agency “outside its statutory limits” or that raise questions not “closely tied to the application and interpretation of statutes related to the Patent

Office’s decision to initiate inter partes review.” *Cuozzo Speed Techs., LLC v. Lee*, 136 S. Ct. 2131, 2141 (2016); *see Thryv, Inc. v. Click-to-Call Techs., LP*, 140 S. Ct. 1367, 1373 (2020). Cisco’s challenges fit each of those categories.

But were there any doubt about this Court’s appellate jurisdiction, there can be no question that this Court has mandamus jurisdiction to afford Cisco the relief it seeks. Accordingly, Cisco asks that the Court construe these appeals as alternatively seeking mandamus relief.¹

At the very least, this Court should refer the jurisdictional questions to the merits panel. The jurisdictional issues here involve important questions of law, which have not been addressed in a precedential opinion of this Court, with far-reaching effects on the scope of this Court’s authority to review PTAB decisions. They should not be decided absent full briefing. Moreover, the jurisdictional questions here are bound up with the underlying merits of Cisco’s appeals. This Court would benefit from the more fulsome briefing and argument of those issues that will be allowed before the merits panel.

¹ Cisco has a separate mandamus petition pending (Case No. 20-148) but makes this request here out of an abundance of caution and because the question warrants full briefing and argument before a merits panel.

BACKGROUND

Congress creates IPR to provide an efficient and expert avenue for defendants challenging patent validity.

Congress enacted the AIA in response to “a growing sense that questionable patents are too easily obtained and are too difficult to challenge.” H.R. Rep. No. 112-98, at 39-40 (2011) (“House Report”). Existing administrative processes had proved “unsatisf[ying]”: Too many “bad patents” still “slip[ped] through,” and the costs of challenging them remained too high. *SAS Inst. Inc. v. Iancu*, 138 S. Ct. 1348, 1353 (2018).

Accordingly, Congress created IPR—a more expert, efficient, and cost-effective alternative to district court litigation for testing the validity of patent claims. House Report at 40, 48. In other words, IPR was “designed in large measure to simplify proceedings before the courts and to give the courts the benefit of the expert agency’s full and focused consideration of the effect of prior art on patents being asserted in litigation.” *NFC Tech. LLC v. HTC Am., Inc.*, 2015 WL 1069111, at *4 (E.D. Tex. Mar. 11, 2015) (Bryson, J., sitting by designation).

To effectuate that goal, Congress ensured that IPR would remain open to district court infringement defendants by granting them one

year to seek IPR after receiving “a complaint alleging infringement of the [challenged] patent.” 35 U.S.C. § 315(b) (barring institution of later-filed petitions). The statute nowhere authorizes the agency to deny institution of a timely filed petition just because the petitioner is also a defendant in an infringement action.

The PTAB begins improperly using precedential decisions to restrict institution of petitions filed by defendants.

For the first six years of IPR, things worked as intended: IPR provided “a significant improvement over district court litigation and previous USPTO procedures,” and “clearly demonstrate[d] its success thus far as a means to increase patent quality.” Sasha Moss et al., *Inter Partes Review as a Means to Improve Patent Quality*, 46 R Street Shorts 1, 4 (2017), <https://tinyurl.com/yya2n86u>.

Through all that time, the Board never considered the progress of a related district court infringement action to be relevant to the institution decision, beyond ensuring compliance with § 315(b)’s one-year limit. Indeed, the vast majority of instituted petitions—over 85%—involved a patent that was simultaneously being litigated in district court. David Ruschke & Scott R. Boalick, *PTAB Update*, USPTO (2017), <https://tinyurl.com/y7c2nxqq>.

But starting with *NHK Spring Co. v. Intri-Plex Techs., Inc.*, IPR2018-00752, Paper 8 (PTAB Sept. 12, 2018) (designated precedential May 7, 2019) (“*NHK*”), the Board declared that it would treat the “advanced state of the district court proceeding” as a “factor that weighs in favor of denying” a timely IPR petition as a matter of discretion under § 314(a). *Id.* at 20. Then, in *Apple Inc. v. Fintiv, Inc.*, IPR2020-00019, Paper 11 (PTAB Mar. 20, 2020) (designated precedential May 5, 2020) (“*Fintiv*”), the Board made clear that it could deny institution of an otherwise meritorious petition *solely* due to the progress of the related district court action. *Id.* at 5-6. The Board outlined five factors related to the status of a parallel district court action that it would consider when determining whether to deny institution on that basis:

- (1) “whether the court granted a stay or evidence exists that one may be granted if a proceeding is instituted”;
- (2) “proximity of the court’s trial date to the Board’s projected statutory deadline for a final written decision”;
- (3) “investment in the parallel proceeding by the court and the parties”;
- (4) “overlap between issues raised in the petition and in the parallel proceeding”; and

(5) “whether the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same party.”

Id. at 6. The Board also included a final factor, (6) “other circumstances that impact the Board’s exercise of discretion, including the merits.” *Id.*

After the Board issued *NHK* and *Fintiv*, the Director designated them as “precedential.” *Precedential and Informative Decisions*, USPTO, <https://tinyurl.com/y2ja3c7r> (last visited Aug. 31, 2020) (listing precedential decisions). Thus, the *NHK/Fintiv* rule now constitutes “binding Board authority in subsequent matters involving similar facts or issues.” *Standard Operating Procedure 2*, USPTO 11 (Rev. 10 2018), <https://perma.cc/PY6P-FGSD>.

Cisco is denied IPR institution based on the NHK/Fintiv rule.

Since the *NHK/Fintiv* rule became binding, the Board has used it to deny dozens of potentially meritorious petitions based solely on the timeline of a co-pending district court infringement suit—including Cisco’s petitions.²

² *E.g.*, *Apple Inc. v. Maxell, Ltd*, IPR2020-00203, Paper 12 (PTAB July 6, 2020); *Supercell Oy v. Gree, Inc.*, IPR2020-00215, Paper 10 (PTAB June 10, 2020); *Intel Corp. v. VLSI Tech. LLC*, IPR2020-00158, Paper 16 (PTAB May 20, 2020); *Vizio, Inc. v. Polaris PowerLED Techs., LLC*, IPR2020-00043, Paper 30 (PTAB May 4, 2020).

Less than five months after Cisco was sued for patent infringement in the Eastern District of Texas, Cisco filed two IPR petitions.³ See *Cisco Sys., Inc. v. Ramot at Tel Aviv Univ. Ltd.*, IPR2020-00122, -00123 (PTAB); *Ramot at Tel Aviv Univ. Ltd. v. Cisco Sys., Inc.*, No. 2:19-cv-00225 (E.D. Tex.). When Cisco filed the petitions, the district court had already set a tentative trial date for December 2020, just 18 months after the filing of the complaint. E.D. Tex. Dkt. No. 31.⁴ The district court denied Cisco’s motion for a stay of the litigation pending resolution of the IPR, explaining that it considers pre-institution stays “inherently premature.” E.D. Tex. Dkt. No. 54.

The Board denied institution of Cisco’s petitions based on the *NHK/Fintiv* rule, over a dissent by APJ Crumbley. Appx1-50. The majority explained that institution was not warranted because the district court proceeding involved the same parties and claims; the parties had started expert discovery and “spent months briefing the district court on the claim construction issues”; and the district court’s

³ In January 2020, Cisco filed a third IPR petition (IPR2020-00484) challenging a patent added by Ramot in its amended complaint. E.D. Tex. Dkt. No. 48. That petition was denied on August 18, 2020, after Cisco filed these appeals.

⁴ E.D. Tex. Dkt. No. citations refer to filings in No. 2:19-cv-00225.

trial date was “substantially earlier than the projected statutory deadline for the Board’s final decision.” Appx8, Appx11. The majority did not analyze whether Cisco was likely to prevail on its invalidity claims; it simply stated that the “merits” of Cisco’s petitions “d[id] not outweigh the *Fintiv* factors.” Appx11.

In dissent, APJ Crumbley objected that the Board’s approach contravened the AIA’s statutory scheme, which specifically “intended [IPR] as an alternative to district court patent litigation.” Appx12. Cisco “did exactly what Congress envisioned”: “[U]pon being sued for infringement, and having received notice of the claims it was alleged to infringe, it diligently filed a Petition with the Board, seeking review of the patentability of those claims in the alternative tribunal created by the AIA.” Appx24. Denying institution, therefore, “penalize[s]” Cisco “for timing issues that are outside its control,” and creates incentives for parties to rush IPR petitions. Appx23. At bottom, APJ Crumbley explained, the majority’s rule “tip[s] the scales against a petitioner merely for being a defendant in the district court”—even though there is “no basis for such a presumption, either in the text of the statute or in the intent of Congress.” Appx22.

Cisco timely appealed from both decisions denying institution. *See* Nos. 2020-2047, 2020-2049, Dkt. No. 1. This Court consolidated the appeals and ordered Cisco to show cause why the Court has jurisdiction, in light of 35 U.S.C. § 314(d); 28 U.S.C. § 1295(a)(4)(A); *Cuozzo*, 136 S. Ct. at 2140; *St. Jude Med., Cardiology Div., Inc. v. Volcano Corp.*, 749 F.3d 1373, 1375 (Fed. Cir. 2014); and *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1377. *See* No. 2020-2047, Dkt. No. 12. On August 27, 2020, Cisco filed a petition for mandamus, concurrent with a motion to hold the petition in abeyance pending resolution of the show-cause order. Cisco also requested that the Court consolidate the mandamus petition with these direct appeals if they are not dismissed.

ARGUMENT

I. This Court Has Jurisdiction.

Any argument that this Court lacks jurisdiction must overcome the “strong presumption in favor of judicial review,” by showing “clear and convincing indications that Congress meant to foreclose review.” *SAS*, 138 S. Ct. at 1359. Here, 28 U.S.C. § 1295(a)(4)(A) confers authority to hear appeals of Board IPR decisions. And no statute, including 35 U.S.C. § 314(d) and § 319, gives any indication—much less

a “clear and convincing” one—that Congress intended to withdraw jurisdiction over appeals like these, which challenge a new and ultra vires institution standard, rather than the case-specific application of existing, authorized institution factors.

Even if this Court lacks jurisdiction over Cisco’s direct appeals, it unquestionably has mandamus jurisdiction to order the PTAB to reconsider Cisco’s IPR petitions without relying on the unlawful *NHK/Fintiv* rule. Cisco therefore requests that the Court construe its appeal as alternatively seeking mandamus.

A. Section 314(d) does not bar these appeals.

1. As the Supreme Court has emphasized—and this Court has confirmed—§ 314(d)’s appeal bar does not categorically preclude direct appellate review of institution decisions. Rather, § 314(d) bars only those “appeals consisting of questions that are closely tied to the application and interpretation of statutes related to the institution decision,” *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1376 n.8—i.e., appeals that challenge the Board’s determination that a particular petition does (or does not) meet statutory institution standards. For all other appeals—most notably, those “that implicate constitutional questions, that depend on other less

closely related statutes,” and those that contend that the agency “act[ed] outside its statutory limits”—jurisdiction still lies. *Cuozzo*, 136 S. Ct. at 2141-42; *SAS*, 138 S. Ct. at 1359; *see also In re Power Integrations, Inc.*, 899 F.3d 1316, 1321 (Fed. Cir. 2018).

Thus, in cases where courts have declined to review institution decisions, it has been because they turned on the application of express “conditions” on institution “set by statute.” *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1370. In *Cuozzo*, the appellant challenged the Board’s determination that a petition satisfied § 312(a)(3)’s requirement that it be pleaded “with particularity.” 136 S. Ct. at 2142. *Thryv* and *St. Jude* each involved a challenge to the Board’s determination that a petition was filed (or not) within § 315(b)’s one-year limitations period. *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1370; *St. Jude*, 749 F.3d at 1375. In another recent case, the appellant challenged the Board’s determination that two entities were not “real part[ies] in interest” required to be disclosed in the petition by § 312(a). *See ESIP Series 2, LLC v. Puzhen Life USA, LLC*, 958 F.3d 1378, 1385-86 (Fed. Cir. 2020).

By contrast, courts have allowed appeals to proceed that do not merely “raise[] ‘an ordinary dispute about the application of’ an

institution-related statute.” *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1373 (quoting *Cuozzo*, 136 S. Ct. at 2139). In *SAS*, for instance, the appeal could proceed because it alleged that the Director’s practice of instituting review on less than all claims transgressed the statutory limits imposed by § 318(a), which required him to review “any patent claim challenged by the petitioner.” 138 S. Ct. at 1354, 1357. Similarly, in *Cuozzo*, the Court explained that jurisdiction would lie over an IPR decision that “cancel[led] a patent claim for indefiniteness under § 112,” because that would run afoul of § 311(b), which limits IPR to “ground[s] that could be raised under section 102 or 103,” 35 U.S.C. § 311(b). 136 S. Ct. at 2141-42.

2. Cisco’s appeals attack the *NHK/Fintiv* rule on two separate grounds: one procedural, one substantive. Both grounds fall outside § 314(d) for two reasons each: (1) They turn on questions that are *not* “closely tied to the application and interpretation of statutes related to the institution decision,” *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1373, and (2) charge the agency with “engag[ing] in shenanigans by exceeding its statutory bounds,” *SAS*, 138 S. Ct. at 1359. Therefore, “judicial review remains available” for both the procedural and substantive arguments. *Id.*

a. Cisco first contends that the *NHK/Fintiv* rule violates the procedural limits imposed by the AIA and APA. Section 316(a) of the AIA provides that if the agency wishes to add “standards for the showing of sufficient grounds to institute” IPR, or indeed any rule “governing inter partes review,” it “shall” do so through “regulations.” *Id.* § 316(a)(2), (4). And both the AIA and established caselaw make clear that “regulations” means notice-and-comment rulemaking. 35 U.S.C. § 2(b)(2); *U.S. Telecom Ass’n v. FCC*, 400 F.3d 29, 38, 40 (D.C. Cir. 2005) (“when a statute defines a duty in terms of agency regulations, those regulations are considered legislative rules” and legislative rules must be issued “pursuant to the [APA’s] notice-and-comment requirements”). Moreover, because the *NHK/Fintiv* rule “alter[s] the rights or interests of parties,” by defining the circumstances under which the door to IPR will be closed, it is the kind of legislative rule the APA also requires be promulgated with notice and comment. *JEM Broad. Co. v. FCC*, 22 F.3d 320, 326 (D.C. Cir. 1994). But it was not. Instead, the agency adopted the *NHK/Fintiv* rule through the Director’s precedential-designation process, with no opportunity for, or consideration of, public input.

This procedural challenge falls outside § 314(d)'s appeal bar for at least two reasons. First, it charges the agency with having “engaged in shenanigans by exceeding its statutory bounds,” *SAS*, 138 S. Ct. at 1359—specifically, by flouting provisions of the APA and AIA that require the agency to set institution standards by notice-and-comment rulemaking. Second, it is not directed to “the [USPTO’s] application and interpretation of statutes related to’ the institution decision.” *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1373 (quoting *Cuozzo*, 136 S. Ct. at 2141). Rather, it turns on § 706(2)(A) of the APA, which applies generally to agency action, and § 316(a), which sets out the USPTO’s rulemaking obligations with respect to IPR. In this way, Cisco’s challenge is categorically distinct from cases like *Cuozzo* and *Thryv*, which challenged the USPTO’s interpretation of statutory institution requirements and application of those requirements to a given set of facts. Indeed, the Board did not even purport to apply (or interpret) any statutory requirement here.

b. Cisco also contends that the *NHK/Fintiv* rule substantively contravenes Congress’s carefully considered judgment that a parallel infringement suit should *not* prevent the institution of an otherwise

appropriate IPR. Indeed, the whole point of IPR is to afford defendants in district court infringement actions an alternative way—and one that is more efficient and expert—to challenge the validity of the patent claims asserted against them. *See PPC Broadband, Inc. v. Corning Optical Commc'ns RF, LLC*, 815 F.3d 734, 741 (Fed. Cir. 2016); *supra* 4-5.

In the AIA, Congress clearly set forth the factors the agency must and may consider when deciding whether to grant institution. *E.g.*, 35 U.S.C. §§ 314(a), 325(d). But the statute does not authorize the agency to deny IPR simply because the petitioner is raising invalidity defenses against the same patent in an infringement suit. Congress's silence is telling, for Congress elsewhere empowered the PTAB to deny or modify its proceedings based on related matters. *E.g.*, *id.* § 315(d) (authorizing the Director to alter, and even “terminat[e]” an IPR if a related matter is also pending before the Patent Office); *id.* § 315(a)(2) (barring institution where a petitioner had previously challenged the patent's validity in a declaratory action).

Instead, Congress made clear that, so long as the defendant in an infringement action petitions for IPR within one-year of receiving the

complaint, IPR remains available, however quickly the infringement case advances in the district court. *See id.* § 315(b). Section 315(b) shows that Congress wanted only to “minimize burdensome overlap between inter partes review and patent-infringement litigation” by imposing a one-year filing deadline, *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1375; it did not intend for the agency to block IPR petitions that were filed within that window. *Cf. Petrella v. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Inc.*, 572 U.S. 663, 667 (2014) (courts cannot use extra-statutory factor to reject claim brought within statute’s window for filing). The *NHK/Fintiv* rule, however, effectively eviscerates that one-year window, forcing defendants to file their IPR petitions as soon as they are served with infringement suits, lest the district court set an early trial date. Indeed, in some judicial districts—particularly the “rocket dockets” popular with patent assertion entities—trial dates are set for such an early date that, once a complaint is filed, it is already too late to avoid non-institution on *NHK/Fintiv* grounds.

This challenge to the *NHK/Fintiv* rule also fits comfortably within two exceptions to § 314(d)’s appeal bar. It is not “closely tied to the application and interpretation of statutes related to the institution

decision,” *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1373, because the *NHK/Fintiv* rule is not a statutory institution factor at all; it is entirely invented. And the PTAB exceeded its statutory authority when it adopted a rule that is directly contrary to the text, structure, and purpose of the AIA.

3. Because Cisco’s appeals do not “raise[] ‘an ordinary dispute about the application of an institution-related statute,” *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1373 (quoting *Cuozzo*, 136 S. Ct. at 2139), these cases are categorically different from all those cited in the show-cause order—indeed, all those in which this Court or the Supreme Court has found jurisdiction lacking. *See supra* § I.A.1. Never has this Court (or the Supreme Court) dismissed an appeal under § 314(d) that brought this sort of broad-based challenge to an ultra vires rule.

There is no reason to strike that new ground here and certainly not a reason good enough to overcome the “strong presumption in favor of judicial review” in these cases. *Cuozzo*, 136 S. Ct. at 2140. Section 314(d) limited judicial review in order to reduce the risk of “leaving bad patents enforceable” and “to avoid the significant costs” and “wast[ed] ... resources” of allowing appellants to “unwind” a final determination of invalidity based on a technicality. *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1374, 1376. But

barring Cisco's appeals would advance neither interest. Because Cisco's appeals challenge a rule that *prevents* institution of meritorious IPR petitions, dismissing them would actually "operate to *save* bad patent claims," not eliminate them as Congress intended. *Id.* at 1374 (emphasis added). Moreover, because Cisco is seeking an initial validity determination, not to overturn one already rendered (as the challenges in *Thryv* and *Cuozzo* did), there is no risk of "wasting the resources" the agency already "spent resolving patentability." *Id.*

Dismissing Cisco's appeals under § 314(d) would be particularly perverse given that the agency should have acted by rulemaking—a type of agency action over which there unquestionably would have been judicial review. *See* 5 U.S.C. § 704. If § 314(d) is read to prohibit even Cisco's procedural challenge, it would give the agency unprecedented power to unilaterally decide which of its own actions should be subject to—or shielded from—judicial scrutiny. That unique aspect of Cisco's challenge not only differentiates it from all other challenges that this Court or the Supreme Court have turned away under § 314(d), but also means that allowing these appeals to proceed will not open the door to appeals of institution decisions across the board.

B. Section 1295(a)(4)(A) confers jurisdiction over these appeals, and § 319 does not withdraw it.

Section 1295(a)(4)(A) grants this Court authority to hear an “appeal from a decision of the Patent Trial and Appeal Board ... with respect to ... inter partes review.” These appeals fit that bill. The Board’s denial of Cisco’s IPR petition was a “decision” because it was “a final dispositive ruling that end[ed] litigation on the merits,” *Copelands’ Enters., Inc. v. CNV, Inc.*, 887 F.2d 1065, 1067 (Fed. Cir. 1989). And that decision was indisputably one “with respect to ... inter partes review.” Said otherwise, the Board’s “final decision ... dispos[ing] of an IPR proceeding ... is a ‘decision’ from the Board with respect to IPR,” so § 1295(a)(4)(A) “provides a right to appeal.” *Arthrex, Inc. v. Smith & Nephew, Inc.*, 880 F.3d 1345, 1349 (Fed. Cir. 2018).

Section 319—discussed by *St. Jude*, cited in the show-cause order—does not withdraw that jurisdiction. Indeed, this Court has specifically held that “§ 319 does not cabin the appeal rights conferred by § 1295.” *Id.* at 1348. That is because § 319—which states that “[a] party [to an inter partes review] dissatisfied with the final written decision of the Patent Trial and Appeal Board under section 318(a) may appeal the decision”—“on its face” makes no claim to “provide the

exclusive means for appeal [of] IPR decisions.” *Id.* at 1348-49. Section 319 merely confirms that a party may appeal when the Board issues a § 318(a) final written decision; it does not “impliedly preclude[] review” that otherwise exists “under § 1295.” *Id.* at 1349.⁵

Arthrex also explained why *St. Jude* does not cut back this Court’s jurisdiction under § 1295(a)(4)(A). *Arthrex* acknowledged that “*St. Jude* stated that § 1295(a)(4)(A) ‘is most naturally read to refer precisely to the Board’s decision ... on the merits of the *inter partes* review’” and that “the final written decision is the only decision that the statute authorizes a dissatisfied party to appeal.” *Id.* at 1348-49. But the Court explained that such statements were not binding as to the scope of § 1295(a)(4)(A) or § 319(d) because, “[i]n *St. Jude*, the issue was” not whether § 319 implicitly abrogated § 1295(a)(4)(A), but “whether [the]

⁵ For the same reasons, 35 U.S.C. § 141(c) (also mentioned in *St. Jude*) does not preclude jurisdiction here. Section 141(c) is substantively identical to § 319. Indeed, § 319 specifically directs that an appeal under that provision is “pursuant to section[] 141.” So if § 319 leaves untouched this Court’s jurisdiction, so does § 141(c).

appeal was barred by § 314(d).” *Id.* at 1349. Just as *St. Jude* did not bar the *Arthrex* appeal, then, it does not preclude these appeals.⁶

Nor does *Cuozzo* suggest that denials of institution are categorically beyond this Court’s jurisdiction. The show-cause order quotes *Cuozzo*’s statement that “the agency’s decision to deny a petition [for inter partes review] is a matter committed to the Patent Office’s discretion,” 136 S. Ct. at 2140, but that statement is not about jurisdiction. As the citation following that sentence indicates, it refers to whether the agency action is one “committed to agency discretion by law” under § 701(a)(2) of the APA, *see id.* (citing § 701(a)(2))—a question that goes to the *merits* of the APA claim, not to *jurisdiction*. *Sierra Club v. Jackson*, 648 F.3d 848, 854 (D.C. Cir. 2011).

Even as to the merits, *Cuozzo* is no impediment to Cisco’s claims, as it does not (and could not) suggest that the agency possesses *unlimited* discretion to deny IPR petitions. Whatever discretion the Director might have to deny IPR petitions cannot be exercised in a manner that is contrary to the statute’s text, structure, and purpose.

⁶ To the extent there is any tension between the reasoning of the two decisions, that is yet another reason to refer these appeals to the merits panel.

See Utility Air Regulatory Grp. v. EPA, 573 U.S. 302, 321 (2014); *Tokyo Kikai Seisakusho, Ltd. v. United States*, 529 F.3d 1352, 1361 (Fed. Cir. 2008).

C. If this court doubts its appellate jurisdiction, it should treat Cisco’s appeals as alternatively seeking mandamus.

If this Court doubts its appellate jurisdiction, it should construe Cisco’s appeals as alternatively seeking a writ of mandamus directing the Board to reconsider Cisco’s IPR petitions free from the *NHK/Fintiv* rule and allow the cases to proceed on that basis. *See* IPR2020-00122, Paper No. 17, IPR2020-00123, Paper No. 16 (notices of appeal citing 28 U.S.C. § 1651 as a basis for jurisdiction). Mandamus jurisdiction avoids the jurisdictional problems that either § 314(d) or § 319 might create.

As to § 314(d), *Thryv* went out of its way to note that, even if § 314(d) acted to bar a direct appeal, “mandamus” might still “be available in an extraordinary case.” 140 S. Ct. at 1374 n.6.

And § 319, by its terms, deals only with when a party “may appeal.” And so even if § 319 limited this Court’s appellate jurisdiction under § 1295(a)(4)(A), it could not limit the availability of mandamus under 28 U.S.C. § 1651, which requires no “appeal.”

Accordingly, if this Court determines that § 314(d) or § 319 bars these appeals, it should treat Cisco as alternatively seeking a writ of mandamus directing the agency to reconsider its IPR petitions free from the *NHK/Fintiv* rule, and allow the cases to proceed on that ground.

II. The Court Should Not Dismiss These Appeals Without Full Briefing.

At the very least, the jurisdictional question is close enough to warrant referral to the merits panel for resolution on full briefing.

The show-cause order raises important questions about this Court's authority to review PTAB decisions that have not been addressed in a precedential decision of this Court. The order focuses on § 314(d), a statute whose exact scope remains an open question—as illustrated by the recent spate of (divided) opinions on the issue from both this Court and the Supreme Court. *See, e.g., In re Cuozzo Speed Techs., LLC*, 793 F.3d 1268 (Fed. Cir. 2015), *aff'd*, *Cuozzo*, 136 S. Ct. 2131; *SAS Inst., Inc. v. ComplementSoft, LLC*, 825 F.3d 1341 (Fed. Cir. 2016), *rev'd*, *SAS*, 138 S. Ct. 1348; *Wi-Fi One, LLC v. Broadcom Corp.*, 878 F.3d 1364 (Fed. Cir. 2018) (en banc), *abrogated by Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. 1367. And there is arguably tension in this Court's caselaw about the meaning of § 319. *Compare Arthrex*, 880 F.3d at 1349, *with St. Jude*,

749 F.3d at 1376. Questions about the scope of those two statutes warrant careful consideration by a merits panel (if not the en banc court) after full briefing and argument. Neither should be resolved in passing, by a motions panel, on abbreviated filings.

Full review is especially important here, where the main jurisdictional issue, regarding § 314(d), is enmeshed with the merits. As illustrated above, *supra* § I.A., determining whether § 314(d) applies here requires the Court to determine whether each of Cisco's challenges turns on "questions that are closely tied to the application and interpretation of statutes related to the institution decision," *Thryv*, 140 S. Ct. at 1376 n.8, or instead turns on "less closely related statutes" or asserts that "the agency ... act[ed] outside its statutory limits," *Cuozzo*, 136 S. Ct. at 2141. That kind of close analysis of the merits of Cisco's claims is best performed by the merits panel with the benefit of more thorough briefing. This Court routinely addresses jurisdiction and the merits of PTAB appeals in a single decision after full merits briefing. *See, e.g., Versata Dev. Grp., Inc. v. SAP Am., Inc.*, 793 F.3d 1306 (Fed. Cir. 2015); *Uniloc 2017 LLC v. Hulu, LLC*, 966 F.3d 1295 (Fed. Cir.

2020); *Arthrex*, 880 F.3d 1345; *Nobel Biocare Servs. AG v. Instradent USA, Inc.*, 903 F.3d 1365 (Fed. Cir. 2018). It should do the same here.

CONCLUSION

The Court has appellate jurisdiction over these appeals and should permit it to proceed. Alternatively, the Court should construe Cisco as seeking mandamus, refer any jurisdictional questions to the merits panel, or do both.

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ADDENDUM

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.,
Petitioner,

v.

RAMOT AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY LTD.,
Patent Owner.

IPR2020-00122
Patent 10,033,465 B1

Before CHRISTOPHER L. CRUMBLEY, MONICA S. ULLAGADDI, and
JASON M. REPKO, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

Opinion for the Board filed by *Administrative Patent Judge* REPKO.

Opinion Dissenting filed by *Administrative Patent Judge* CRUMBLEY.

REPKO, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION
Denying Institution of *Inter Partes* Review
35 U.S.C. § 314

I. INTRODUCTION

Cisco Systems Inc. (“Petitioner”) filed a petition to institute *inter partes* review of claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 of U.S. Patent No. 10,033,465 B1 (Ex. 1001, “the ’465 patent”). Paper 2 (“Pet.”). Ramot at Tel Aviv University Ltd. (“Patent Owner”) filed a Preliminary Response. Paper 9 (“Prelim. Resp.”).

To institute an *inter partes* review, we must determine “that there is a reasonable likelihood that the petitioner would prevail with respect to at least 1 of the claims challenged in the petition.” 35 U.S.C. § 314(a). But the Board has discretion to deny a petition even when a petitioner meets that threshold. *Id.*; *see, e.g., Cuozzo Speed Techs., LLC v. Lee*, 136 S. Ct. 2131, 2140 (2016) (“[T]he agency’s decision to deny a petition is a matter committed to the Patent Office’s discretion.”); *Gen. Plastic Indus. Co. v. Canon Kabushiki Kaisha*, IPR2016-01357, Paper 19 (PTAB Sept. 6, 2017) (precedential as to § II.B.4.i); *NHK Spring Co. v. Intri-Plex Techs., Inc.*, IPR2018-00752, Paper 8 (PTAB Sept. 12, 2018) (precedential); Patent Trial and Appeal Board Consolidated Trial Practice Guide 64 (Nov. 20, 2019), <http://www.uspto.gov/TrialPracticeGuideConsolidated> (identifying considerations that may warrant exercise of this discretion).

We authorized additional briefing to address discretionary denial of the Petition under § 314(a). Paper 10. Petitioner filed a reply. Paper 11 (“Reply”). And Patent Owner filed a sur-reply. Paper 12 (“Sur-reply”).

For the reasons discussed below, we exercise our discretion under § 314(a) to deny institution here.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Related Matters

According to the parties, the '465 patent has been asserted in *Ramot at Tel Aviv University Ltd. v. Cisco Systems, Inc.*, No. 2:19-cv-00225 (E.D. Tex. filed June 12, 2019). Pet. 7–8; Paper 5, 2 (Patent Owner's Mandatory Notice).

B. The '465 patent

The '465 patent generally relates to optical-signal modulation. *See, e.g.*, Ex. 1001, Abstract. At the time of the invention, analog optics modulation systems typically used Mach-Zehnder Interferometer (MZI) modulators. *Id.* at 1:50–56. MZI modulators, though, have an inherent non-linear response. *Id.* at 1:56–58. This can be a problem in analog applications. *Id.* And solutions at the time were inefficient, complex, or had limited dynamic range. *See id.* at 1:64–2:29

To address these problems, the patent describes using a digital-to-digital converter (DDC) to convert the input data to an electrode-actuation pattern that more closely matches an ideal linear response. *Id.* at 7:41–45, 7:58–66. Because the conversion is efficiently performed in the digital domain, the invention can be used in high-frequency systems. *Id.* at 7:59–62.

C. Claims

Of the challenged claims, claims 1 and 4 are independent and are reproduced below.

1. A method for converting digital electrical data into modulated optical streams, said method comprising
inputting into an optical modulator N bits of digital data in parallel, N being larger than 1;

mapping a set of N input values corresponding to said N bits of digital data to a vector of M voltage values where M is equal to or larger than N;

driving at least M electrodes of the optical modulator, enabled to pulse modulate at least an input optical stream, responsively to the M voltage values, to provide at least a pulse modulated output optical stream.

Ex. 1001, 17:6–14.

4. A method for converting digital electrical data into modulated optical streams, said method comprising

inputting into an optical modulator N bits of digital data in parallel, N being larger than 1;

mapping a set of N input values corresponding to said N bits of digital data to a vector of M voltage values where M is equal to or larger than N;

driving at least M electrodes of the optical modulator, enabled to modulate by QAM at least an input optical stream, responsively to the M voltage values, to provide at least a QAM modulated output optical stream.

Ex. 1001, 17:34–44.

D. Evidence

Reference	Issued Date	Exhibit No.
US 7,277,603 B1 to Roberts	Oct. 2, 2007	1005
US 7,609,935 B2 to Burchfiel	Oct. 27, 2009	1008
Keang-Po Ho, Phase-Modulated Optical Communication Systems, 2005 (Ex. 1006)		

E. Asserted Grounds

Petitioner asserts that claims 1, 2, 4, and 5 would have been unpatentable on the following grounds. Pet. 22.

Claim(s) Challenged	pre-AIA¹ 35 U.S.C. §	Reference(s)/Basis
1, 2, 4, and 5	103	Roberts
1, 2, 4, and 5	103	Roberts, Ho
1, 2, 4, and 5	103	Roberts, Burchfiel

F. § 314(a)

Under § 314(a), the Director has discretion to deny institution. In determining whether to exercise that discretion on behalf of the Director, we are guided by the Board’s precedential decision in *NHK Spring Co. v. Intriplex Technologies, Inc.*, IPR2018-00752, Paper 8 (PTAB Sept. 12, 2018).

In *NHK*, the Board found that the “advanced state of the district court proceeding” was a “factor that weighs in favor of denying” the petition under § 314(a). *NHK*, Paper 8 at 20. The Board determined that “[i]nstitution of an *inter partes* review under these circumstances would not be consistent with ‘an objective of the AIA . . . to provide an effective and efficient alternative to district court litigation.’” *Id.* (citing *Gen. Plastic*, Paper 19 at 16–17 (precedential in relevant part)).

“[T]he Board’s cases addressing earlier trial dates as a basis for denial under *NHK* have sought to balance considerations such as system efficiency, fairness, and patent quality.” *Apple Inc. v. Fintiv Inc.*, IPR2020-00019, Paper 11 at 5 (PTAB Mar. 20, 2020) (precedential) (collecting cases). *Fintiv* sets forth six non-exclusive factors for determining “whether efficiency, fairness,

¹ Congress amended § 103 when it passed the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (AIA), Pub. L. No. 112–29, § 3(c), 125 Stat. 284, 287 (2011). Here, the previous version of § 103 applies.

and the merits support the exercise of authority to deny institution in view of an earlier trial date in the parallel proceeding.” *Id.* at 6. These factors consider

1. whether the court granted a stay or evidence exists that one may be granted if a proceeding is instituted;
2. proximity of the court’s trial date to the Board’s projected statutory deadline for a final written decision;
3. investment in the parallel proceeding by the court and the parties;
4. overlap between issues raised in the petition and in the parallel proceeding;
5. whether the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same party; and
6. other circumstances that impact the Board’s exercise of discretion, including the merits.

Id. In the sections that follow, we discuss each factor.

1. Factor 1: whether the court granted a stay or evidence exists that one may be granted if a proceeding is instituted

“A district court stay of the litigation pending resolution of the PTAB trial allays concerns about inefficiency and duplication of efforts. This fact has strongly weighed against exercising the authority to deny institution under *NHK*.” *Id.*

Here, the district court has denied the motion to stay without prejudice to its refiling if the Board institutes. Ex. 2005. Petitioner argues that “the court merely referenced its ‘established practice’ of denying such stay requests before an IPR is instituted.” Reply 3 (citing Ex. 2005, 1). According to Petitioner, the district court emphasized in previous decisions to stay that the institution decision was due before the claim construction hearing.

Id. at 4 (citing *Uniloc USA, Inc. v. Google, LLC*, No. 2-17-cv-00231, Dkt. 47 at 2 (E.D. Tex. Oct. 3, 2017)).

But in this case, the claim construction hearing has been held. Ex. 2016, 4 (Amended Docket Control Order). To be sure, at the time that Petitioner filed its reply, the claim construction hearing was scheduled for May 19, 2020—one day after the institution decision’s due date. Ex. 2004, 3. The district court, though, later changed the hearing date to May 11, 2020. Ex. 2016, 4. Thus, Petitioner’s argument about a stay based on the claim construction hearing’s date has lost at least some of its merit. *See* Reply 4.

Regardless, Petitioner acknowledges that “it is unknown and entirely speculative at this point whether the case will be stayed or the trial date will be otherwise delayed.” *Id.*

On this record, we decline to speculate how the district court would rule on another stay request. A judge determines whether to grant a stay based on the facts in each case. Here, there is little evidence to suggest that the district court will grant a stay, should another one be requested. So this factor does not weigh in favor of or against discretionary denial.

2. *Factor 2: proximity of the court’s trial date to the Board’s projected statutory deadline for a final written decision;*

“If the court’s trial date is earlier than the projected statutory deadline, the Board generally has weighed this fact in favor of exercising authority to deny institution under *NHK*.” *Fintiv*, Paper 11 at 9.

According to the current record, the district court trial is scheduled to begin on December 9, 2020. Ex. 2016, 1. The Board may not issue a final decision in this proceeding until approximately May 2021—six months after the trial begins.

Because the trial date is substantially earlier than the projected statutory deadline for the Board’s final decision, this factor weighs in favor of discretionary denial.

3. *Factor 3: investment in the parallel proceeding by the court and the parties*

“The Board also has considered the amount and type of work already completed in the parallel litigation by the court and the parties at the time of the institution decision.” *Fintiv*, Paper 11 at 9. “[M]ore work completed by the parties and court in the parallel proceeding tends to support the arguments that the parallel proceeding is more advanced, a stay may be less likely, and instituting would lead to duplicative costs.” *Id.* at 10. For instance, Petitioner points out that the district court may base its decision to stay, in part, on whether the institution decision is due before the claim construction hearing. Reply 4 (citing *Uniloc USA, Inc. v. Google, LLC*, No. 2-17-cv-00231, Dkt. 47 at 2 (E.D. Tex. Oct. 3, 2017)).

At the time of this decision, the parties have spent months briefing the district court on the claim construction issues in the parallel proceeding. Ex. 2016, 4. Specifically, Petitioner filed its invalidity contentions in the parallel proceeding, including detailed claim charts that address the same prior art cited in the Petition. *See* Ex. 2008 (invalidity contentions); Ex. 2009 (chart). The parties submitted claim construction charts and briefs. Ex. 2016, 4; Ex. 2015 (Joint Claim Construction Statement). And a claim construction hearing was held on May 11, 2020. Ex. 2016, 4.

As for the remaining work, expert discovery is scheduled to be completed within two months. *Id.* at 3 (showing a deadline of July 20, 2020 for completing expert discovery). According to the current schedule, a jury

trial begins in seven months. *Id.* at 1. Similarly, the Board in *NHK* determined that the parallel proceeding in that case was in an “advanced state” when expert discovery was scheduled to end in less than two months and a jury trial was scheduled to begin in six months. *NHK*, Paper 8 at 20. In *NHK*, the Board found the case’s advanced state to be an additional factor that favored denying institution. *Id.* Here, we determine that the district court case is in a similar state and take this into account in our overall assessment of the investment that potentially remains.

To be sure, the district court has yet to issue a claim construction order or make other determinations on the merits. Considering the current investment in the invalidity and construction contentions, though, this factor weighs somewhat in favor of discretionary denial.

4. *Factor 4: overlap between issues raised in the petition and in the parallel proceeding*

“[I]f the petition includes the same or substantially the same claims, grounds, arguments, and evidence as presented in the parallel proceeding, this fact has favored denial.” *Fintiv*, Paper 11 at 12.

The claims involved in the district court proceeding are also challenged in the Petition. Pet. 22; Ex. 2009, 1 (Petitioner’s Invalidity Contentions). And both the Petition and Petitioner’s invalidity contentions in the parallel proceeding include obviousness rationales based on Roberts, alone and in combination with Ho or Burchfiel. *Compare* Ex. 2009, 1, *with* Pet. 22. In fact, Petitioner’s claim-invalidity chart in the parallel proceeding contains substantially similar assertions to those in the Petition. *Compare* Ex. 2009, 3–41, *with* Pet. 22–82 (§ XII Identification of How the Claims are Unpatentable).

Patent Owner argues that Petitioner has not shown that Roberts teaches or suggests the mapping step recited in claims 1, 2, 4, and 5. *See* Prelim. Resp. 50–57. According to Patent Owner, the district court will hear and rule on the same arguments about the correct construction of “mapping.” *Id.* at 11.

Indeed, all challenges in the Petition are based on Roberts. Pet. 22. So the meaning of “mapping” is likely to be one of the central issues in this case. To resolve this issue, the Board would need to hear arguments about the correct construction of “mapping,” which is one of the claim terms to be construed in the district court case. *See, e.g.*, Ex. 2015, 10–17 (Chart of Disputed Constructions). And both proceedings would likely involve similar arguments about Roberts. Ex. 2009, 13–16 (discussing “mapping” in connection with Roberts). In at least these ways, the parallel proceedings would duplicate effort. This is an inefficient use of Board, party, and judicial resources and raises the possibility of conflicting decisions.

Because the Petition includes the same or substantially the same claims, grounds, arguments, and evidence as presented in the parallel proceeding, this factor favors exercising our discretion to deny institution.

5. *Factor 5: whether the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same party*

If the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same, this factor weighs in favor of discretionary denial. *Fintiv*, Paper 11 at 13–14.

Here, Petitioner is the defendant in the parallel litigation in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas in *Ramot at Tel Aviv University Ltd. v. Cisco Systems, Inc.*, No. 2:19-cv-00225 (E.D. Tex. filed

June 12, 2019). Pet. 7–8; Paper 5, 2 (Patent Owner’s Mandatory Notice); *see also* Prelim. Resp. 10 (describing Petitioner’s involvement the case). So this factor weighs in favor of discretionary denial.

6. Conclusion

All *Fintiv* factors weigh in favor of exercising our discretion to deny institution under § 314(a) except for one, which is neutral. We have reviewed the Petition and determine that its merits do not outweigh the *Fintiv* factors—especially considering the number of overlapping issues in district court, which strongly favors denial under factor 4, and the trial date, which is substantially earlier than the projected statutory deadline for the Board’s final decision.

On balance, instituting would be an inefficient use of Board, party, and judicial resources. *See NHK*, Paper 8 at 20. Thus, efficiency and integrity of the system are best served by denying review. *See Consolidated TPG* at 58 (quoting 35 U.S.C. § 316(b)).

III. CONCLUSION

We exercise our discretion under § 314(a) to deny institution.

IV. ORDER

It is

ORDERED that the Petition is *denied*.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.,
Petitioner,

v.

RAMOT AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY LTD.,
Patent Owner.

IPR2020-00122
Patent 10,033,465 B1

Before CHRISTOPHER L. CRUMBLY, MONICA S. ULLAGADDI, and
JASON M. REPKO, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

CRUMBLY, *Administrative Patent Judge*, dissenting.

In my opinion, the case at hand does not present a situation in which it is appropriate for the Board to exercise its discretion to deny institution of trial. Post-grant proceedings under the America Invents Act, including *inter partes* reviews, were intended as an alternative to district court patent litigation that would be both faster and more efficient than an infringement suit. See H. R. Rep. No. 112-98, pt. 1, 48 (2011) (“purpose of the section [is] providing quick and cost effective alternatives to litigation.”); see also *Thryv, Inc v. Click-To-Call Techs., LP*, 140 S. Ct. 1367, 1374 (2020) (“By

providing for inter partes review, Congress, concerned about overpatenting and its diminishment of competition, sought to weed out bad patent claims efficiently.”). The majority’s decision today, following recent Board precedent, risks focusing only on the “faster” aspect of this goal, while sacrificing the “more efficient” aspect. In other words, the majority defers to a district court proceeding merely because it is currently scheduled to be faster than this *inter partes* review would be, without considering whether the Board may nevertheless be a more efficient venue. For the reasons discussed below, I respectfully dissent.

The majority’s analysis primarily focuses on an application of factors set forth in *Apple Inc. v. Fintiv, Inc.*, IPR2020-00019, Paper 11 at 5 (PTAB Mar. 20, 2020) (precedential), an order the Director recently designated as precedential. The “*Fintiv* factors” are precedential to the extent they identify considerations that should be relevant to the Board’s decision whether to deny institution under 35 U.S.C. § 314(a) in light of a copending district court proceeding. But I also note that *Fintiv* was an interlocutory order requesting further briefing from the parties on its factors (*id.* at 17); the panel did not actually apply those factors in the precedential order and there is no precedential “holding,” in the conventional sense of legal precedent.² Therefore, *Fintiv* does not control how we should apply its factors to the facts of this case, nor does it instruct us how to weigh the factors. And it is in this application and weighing of the factors that I disagree with the majority’s approach.

² The Board issued a decision denying institution of trial in *Fintiv* this week. IPR2020-00019, Paper 15. That decision has not been designated precedential and should be given the same weight as any other routine decision of the Board.

1. *Fintiv* Factor One

The first *Fintiv* factor is “whether the court granted a stay or evidence exists that one may be granted if a proceeding is instituted.” The majority correctly notes that the District Court here previously denied the Petitioner’s motion to stay pending the outcome of this *inter partes* review, but that the denial was based on the court’s “established practice” of denying stays prior to the Board’s determination whether to institute trial. And the court’s Order expressly notes that the Petitioner may refile its motion to stay “if and when IPR proceedings are instituted by the PTAB,” expressing its willingness to revisit the question. Ex. 2005, 2. As a starting point, the fact that the district court has expressed willingness to revisit the question of a stay is itself relevant, as the *Fintiv* panel noted, and has “usually” weighed against denial.

Nevertheless, the majority concludes that it is “speculative” whether the court will grant a stay if the motion is renewed, and therefore finds this *Fintiv* factor to be neutral. Of course, the question of whether a district court will grant a stay in any particular case is based on the facts of that case, and we cannot say with certitude what decision the court will reach when Petitioner renews its motion to stay. Indeed, Judge Gilstrap, the presiding judge in the district court proceeding here, has cautioned that “motions to stay are highly individualized matters and parties predict ongoing patterns from the Court at their peril.” *Image Processing Techs., LLC v. Samsung Elects. Co., Ltd.*, 2017 WL 7051628, *1 (E.D. Tex. Oct. 25, 2017). But that does not mean that assessing the likelihood of a stay in determining whether to exercise our discretion to deny institution of trial is a purely speculative exercise.

It is not speculation to look to the facts of this case, and the district court’s past practices in similar circumstances, to assess the likelihood of a

stay pending outcome of an *inter partes* review. Two of these facts—the stage of the district court proceeding, and the overlap of the issues between the proceedings—are separate factors under *Fintiv*, and I address them below under those factors. But these facts also, in my estimation, make it more likely that the court would stay the litigation while the *inter partes* review runs its course. *See Fintiv* at 6 (“there is some overlap among these factors. Some facts may be relevant to more than one factor.”).

Regarding the stage of the district court proceeding, the majority highlights the fact that the court’s claim construction hearing was originally scheduled for the day after our institution decision is due (May 19, 2020), but was recently modified to occur the week prior to our institution decision (May 11, 2020). I fail to see how this fact is especially relevant to whether the district court will grant a stay. Regardless of whether the court’s claim construction hearing has occurred, the court has not yet issued its opinion construing the claims. This has been relevant to the district court’s decision to stay cases in the past. *See Uniloc USA, Inc. v. Google, LLC*, No. 2-17-cv-00231, Dkt. 47, 2 (E.D. Tex. Oct. 3, 2017) (“No patent claims have been construed by the Court in these cases and discovery has barely begun.”). And in any event, even where the court has issued its claim construction order, Judge Gilstrap has granted motions to stay where appropriate. *See Image Processing Techs., LLC* at *2 (granting stay after entry of claim construction order). In my view, the occurrence of the claim construction hearing does not significantly diminish the likelihood of a stay, as the majority implies.

Rather, the facts of this case are dissimilar from cases in which Judge Gilstrap has found that the stage of the litigation weighed against a stay. For example, in *Intellectual Ventures I LLC v. T-Mobile USA, Inc.*, No. 2:17-cv-

00577, Dkt. 255 (E.D. Tex. Dec. 13, 2018), the court denied a stay due to the litigation’s “advanced stage.” But in that case, discovery and claim construction had concluded, the parties had filed expert reports and deposed those experts, and the court had decided several dispositive and *Daubert* motions. *Id.* at 6. Furthermore, at the time the court decided the motion, pretrial was *less than a month away*. *Id.* This is a far cry from the situation in the present case, and signals that the court is less likely to stay the litigation here.

The significant overlap in the invalidity challenges at issue in each proceeding, which the majority notes under the fourth *Fintiv* factor, also makes it more likely that the district court will grant a stay. In deciding whether to stay in view of a copending *inter partes* review, the district court frequently considers whether the stay will simplify the case before the court. *See NFC Techs. LLC v. HTC Am., Inc.*, 2015 WL 1069111, *2 (E.D. Tex. Mar. 11, 2015) (Bryson, J.). Relevant to this question is whether the claims challenged before the Board are the same as those asserted in the infringement trial, and the basis for those challenges. As the majority observes, Petitioner’s claim invalidity chart in the district court is substantially similar to the grounds advanced in the Petition in this case. And I further note that the two other patents asserted before the district court in the litigation are challenged in separate petitions filed before the Board. *See* IPR2020-00123; IPR2020-00484. If we were to institute trial and reach a final written decision in these cases, we would likely simplify, if not resolve entirely, the invalidity issues the district court must address. This is an additional factor that makes a stay of the litigation more likely.

Finally, though it is not an explicit *Fintiv* factor, the Eastern District of Texas has in the past considered the diligence of the defendant in filing its

petitions for *inter partes* review in determining whether to grant a stay. For example, in *Trover Grp., Inc. v. Dedicated Micros USA*, 2015 WL 1069179, *3 (E.D. Tex. Mar. 11, 2015) (Bryson, J.), the court noted that the defendant waited nearly a year after the complaints were served to file its petition for *inter partes* review five days before the statutory deadline, and that this was months after the defendant had served its invalidity contentions. *Id.*; *cf.* *NFC Tech. LLC v. HTC Am., Inc.* 2015 WL 1069111, *4 (E.D. Tex. Mar 11, 2015) (delay of seven and one-half months in filing a petition not unreasonable, especially when it was less than four months after infringement contentions served). By contrast, the Petitioner here appears to have acted diligently in filing its *inter partes* review petition, less than five months after the service of the complaint and less than two months after receiving Patent Owner's infringement contentions. Paper 11, 5. And Petitioner did not even wait to serve its invalidity contentions before filing the instant Petition. Prelim. Resp. 10 (invalidity contentions served Nov. 15, 2019). All of these facts are likely to be considered by the district court as weighing in favor of a stay.

In sum, while we cannot say for certain whether the district court will grant a stay in this case, that is necessarily true of all cases where the court has denied a stay but indicated a willingness to revisit the issue. But that does not make evaluating the likelihood of such a stay a purely speculative endeavor. Based on the facts here, it is reasonably likely that the district court will grant a stay if we were to institute trial, and I would conclude that this *Fintiv* factor weighs strongly against denying institution.

2. *Fintiv* Factor Two

The second *Fintiv* factor takes into account the “proximity of the court’s trial date to the Board’s projected statutory deadline for a final

written decision.” The majority here notes that the current trial date set by the district court is December 9, 2020, while our final written decision will not be due until May 2021. My colleagues conclude that this weighs in favor of discretionary denial.

But the consideration of the “proximity” of the trial date cannot be as simple as comparing two dates on the calendar and determining which is first. Rather, we must take into account the entirety of the facts, which includes the likelihood that the district court will grant a stay. Obviously, if the litigation is stayed—an outcome I have concluded is a significant possibility—the trial date in December of this year will necessarily be pushed back, and will occur after the issuance of our final written decision. The majority does not take this possibility into account in finding that this factor counsel in favor of denial. But the likelihood of a stay significantly diminishes whatever weight this factor may have. As such, I would find that this factor, at best, weighs slightly in favor of denial.

3. *Fintiv* Factor Three

The third *Fintiv* factor considers the “investment in the parallel proceeding by the court and the parties,” with the goal of reducing duplication of effort between the two tribunals. Again, I believe the likelihood of a stay at the district court is relevant here, because it would necessarily eliminate any risk of duplicated effort going forward. But even without considering the likelihood of a stay, I disagree with the majority’s evaluation that the district court proceeding is at an “advanced stage.”

I agree with the majority that, in order to evaluate whether the “investment” in the parallel proceeding is significant enough to weigh against institution, we must look both backward, to the investment that has already been made, as well as forward, to the investment that will be

required if the litigation proceeds. In my view, it is only if the former outweighs the latter that we should consider this factor to favor denial.

The majority primarily looks backward, to the fact that invalidity contentions have been served, claim construction briefing has been completed, and the claim construction hearing held, as evidence of “investment.” But claim construction is one of the earliest stages of any district court patent infringement suit.³ My colleagues only look forward to note that expert discovery closes in two months, and that a jury trial is scheduled in seven months, without taking into account the investment that will be required of the parties and the court during that period. There is no evidence here that the parties have submitted significant briefing on any dispositive issue, or that the court has made any determination on the merits. All of these events have yet to happen, and outweigh the investment to this point.

The majority also analogizes the present case to the situation presented in our precedential decision of *NHK Spring Co. v. Intri-Plex Technologies, Inc.*, IPR2018-00752, Paper 8 (PTAB Sept. 12, 2018) (precedential). But the *NHK Spring* analogy only gets us so far. While I recognize that both cases involve trial dates that are six to seven months away, and expert discovery periods that close in two months, the panel in *NHK Spring* found that this “advanced stage” of the proceeding was only enough to counsel for the denial of institution as an *additional factor* in

³ Indeed, our Rules explicitly contemplate that the Board will often take up an *inter partes* review after a district court has construed the claims at issue—our recently-revised claim construction rule instructs us to take into account a prior claim construction determination made in a civil action. 37 C.F.R. § 42.100(b).

connection with its decision to deny under 35 U.S.C. § 325(d). Here, by contrast, the majority concludes that similar facts are sufficient to counsel for denial *on their own*. This is a significant broadening of the rationale of *NHK Spring*, and should not subsume a measured examination of the stage of the litigation.

I would not conclude on this record that the district court or the parties have made a significant investment in the district court proceeding, and would conclude that this *Fintiv* factor does not counsel in favor of denial.

4. *Fintiv* Factor Four

The fourth *Fintiv* factor examines the “overlap between issues raised in the petition and in the parallel proceeding.” I agree with the majority’s evaluation that the invalidity issues raised in the district court substantially overlap those raised by the Petition before us. But I disagree that this factor should weigh against institution when viewed in light of all of the facts. As discussed above, it is the very fact that there is significant overlap between the issues in the proceedings that makes it more likely that the district court will grant a motion to stay the litigation. The majority’s concern that the “the parallel proceedings would duplicate effort” and that this risks “the possibility of conflicting decisions” is only a concern if we presume that the district court will not stay the litigation. But, as discussed above, there is no basis for such a presumption, and we should not interpret this *Fintiv* factor so strictly that it creates a presumption that both cases will move forward concurrently.

Indeed, if the district court stays the litigation, there is likely no overlap between the issues presented in the proceeding, at all. If the outcome of the *inter partes* review is that all challenged claims are unpatentable, then there is nothing left for the district court to decide on the

question of infringement. On the other hand, if the Board upholds one or more claims, Petitioner is substantially constrained by the estoppels of 35 U.S.C. § 315(e)(2) in the invalidity arguments it can raise before the court, and it is likely that the court will only have to decide the question of infringement. Either way, overlapping issues are unlikely, and Congress' goal of providing an efficient alternative venue for resolving questions of patentability is achieved.

In light of these facts, I would find that the substantial overlap of issues between the district court proceeding and this *inter partes* review weighs against exercising our discretion to deny institution.

5. *Fintiv* Factor Five

The majority applies the fifth *Fintiv* factor as “if the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same, this factor weighs in favor of discretionary denial.” Again, as *Fintiv* is an interlocutory order that did not apply its factors or weigh them, it does not set precedent beyond the definition of the factors themselves. But even setting that issue aside, I believe that the majority misinterprets the factor. The *Fintiv* order merely states that “[i]f a petitioner is *unrelated* to a defendant in an earlier court proceeding, the Board has weighed this fact against exercising discretion to deny institution under *NHK*.” *Fintiv* at 13–14 (emphasis added). In defining the factor, the order says nothing about situations in which the petitioner is the same as, or is related to, the district court defendant. The majority here simply presumes that, in such situations, the factor weighs in favor of denial of institution.⁴

⁴ To be fair, the majority is not alone among panels of the Board that have applied the factor in this manner. *See, e.g.*, IPR2020-00019, Paper 15, 15

My interpretation of the fifth *Fintiv* factor is that it only becomes relevant when the district court defendant and the petitioner before the Board are unrelated, in which case it weighs against denial of institution. In cases such as the one at hand, where the parties are the same, the factor is neutral. To hold otherwise—that the factor weighs in favor of denial if the parties are the same—would, in effect, tip the scales against a petitioner merely for being a defendant in the district court. But I see no basis for such a presumption, either in the text of the statute or in the intent of Congress in passing it. Indeed, it would seem to be contrary to the goal of providing district court litigants an alternative venue to resolve questions of patentability.

I would find that the fifth *Finitiv* factor is neutral in this case.

6. *Fintiv* Factor Six

The final *Fintiv* factor is a catch-all that takes into account any other relevant circumstances. Typically, the Board has looked at the strength of the Petitioner's unpatentability arguments under this factor, because especially strong arguments for patentability may outweigh the other factors. The majority, however, does not address the merits of Petitioner's grounds of unpatentability. While I interpret this to mean that the majority believes the unpatentability grounds in the Petition are not strong enough to outweigh the other factors, in the absence of an explanation I cannot agree or disagree with my colleagues' reasoning. But I need not venture into an evaluation of the merits here, because none of the other factors weigh strongly enough in favor of denial that assessing the merits is necessary.

(same party weighs in favor of denial); IPR2020-00106, Paper 17, 11 (same).

I would, however, consider the Petitioner's diligence in filing its Petition as an "other circumstance" under this *Fintiv* factor. Not only does considering the reasonableness of Petitioner's behavior encourage defendants to act diligently in filing their Petitions with the Board, it also helps ensure that a Petitioner who acts reasonably is not penalized for timing issues that are outside its control. As discussed above, the Petition in this case was filed within two months of receiving the Patent Owner's infringement contentions, and *before* the invalidity contentions were due to be served. It is difficult to see how the Petitioner could reasonably have been expected to file its Petition sooner; to hold otherwise would set an expectation that a Petitioner is expected to hazard a guess as to the claims that will be asserted by the Patent Owner and file a petition as to those claims in the hopes of avoiding a discretionary denial by the Board.

I would conclude that the sixth *Fintiv* factor, taking into account the diligence of the Petitioner, weighs against denial of institution.

7. Conclusion

I would weigh the various *Fintiv* factors as follows. In my evaluation, the only factor that arguably weighs in favor of denial is the second, and only slightly so. The first, third, fourth, and sixth factors weigh against denial, the first strongly so. And the fifth factor is neutral. Based on my assessment, I do not think the case at hand is one in which discretionary denial is appropriate.

But in a broader sense, I also take note of *Fintiv*'s statement that our evaluation of the factors should be based on "a holistic view of whether efficiency and integrity of the system are best served by denying or instituting review." *Fintiv* at 6. And in this sense, a weighing of individual factors aside, I cannot agree with the majority that denying institution here

best serves the efficiency and integrity of the patent system. The Petitioner here did exactly what Congress envisioned in providing for *inter partes* reviews in the America Invents Act: upon being sued for infringement, and having received notice of the claims it was alleged to infringe, it diligently filed a Petition with the Board, seeking review of the patentability of those claims in the alternative tribunal created by the AIA. And based on the facts of this case and the past practice of the district court in similar cases, it is likely that the district court litigation would be stayed if we were to decide to institute review, thereby increasing the efficiency of the system. The *inter partes* review would proceed, necessarily having a narrower scope than the infringement trial before the district court, and would resolve in an efficient manner the patentability questions so that the district court need not take them up. I fail to see how this outcome would be inconsistent with the “efficiency and integrity of the system.”

For these reasons, I respectfully dissent.

IPR2020-00122
Patent 10,033,465 B1

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UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.,
Petitioner,

v.

RAMOT AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY LTD.,
Patent Owner.

IPR2020-00123
Patent 10,270,535 B1

Before CHRISTOPHER L. CRUMBLY, MONICA S. ULLAGADDI, and
JASON M. REPKO, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

Opinion for the Board filed by *Administrative Patent Judge* REPKO.

Opinion Dissenting filed by *Administrative Patent Judge* CRUMBLY.

REPKO, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION
Denying Institution of *Inter Partes* Review
35 U.S.C. § 314

I. INTRODUCTION

Cisco Systems Inc. (“Petitioner”) filed a petition to institute *inter partes* review of claims 1 and 2 of U.S. Patent No. 10,270,535 B1 (Ex. 1001, “the ’535 patent”). Paper 2 (“Pet.”). Ramot at Tel Aviv University Ltd. (“Patent Owner”) filed a Preliminary Response. Paper 8 (“Prelim. Resp.”).

To institute an *inter partes* review, we must determine “that there is a reasonable likelihood that the petitioner would prevail with respect to at least 1 of the claims challenged in the petition.” 35 U.S.C. § 314(a). But the Board has discretion to deny a petition even when a petitioner meets that threshold. *Id.*; *see, e.g., Cuozzo Speed Techs., LLC v. Lee*, 136 S. Ct. 2131, 2140 (2016) (“[T]he agency’s decision to deny a petition is a matter committed to the Patent Office’s discretion.”); *Gen. Plastic Indus. Co. v. Canon Kabushiki Kaisha*, IPR2016-01357, Paper 19 (PTAB Sept. 6, 2017) (precedential as to § II.B.4.i); *NHK Spring Co. v. Intri-Plex Techs., Inc.*, IPR2018-00752, Paper 8 (PTAB Sept. 12, 2018) (precedential); Patent Trial and Appeal Board Consolidated Trial Practice Guide 64 (Nov. 20, 2019), <http://www.uspto.gov/TrialPracticeGuideConsolidated> (identifying considerations that may warrant exercise of this discretion).

We authorized additional briefing to address discretionary denial of the Petition under § 314(a). Paper 9. Petitioner filed a reply. Paper 10 (“Reply”). And Patent Owner filed a sur-reply. Paper 11 (“Sur-reply”).

For the reasons discussed below, we exercise our discretion under § 314(a) to deny institution here.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Related Matters

According to the parties, the '535 patent has been asserted in *Ramot at Tel Aviv University Ltd. v. Cisco Systems, Inc.*, No. 2:19-cv-00225 (E.D. Tex. filed June 12, 2019). Pet. 8; Paper 4, 2 (Patent Owner's Mandatory Notice).

B. The '535 Patent

The '535 patent generally relates to optical-signal modulation. *See, e.g.*, Ex. 1001, Abstract. At the time of the invention, analog optics modulation systems typically used Mach-Zehnder Interferometer (MZI) modulators. *Id.* at 1:52–54. MZI modulators, though, have an inherent non-linear response. *Id.* at 1:58–60. This can be a problem in analog applications. *Id.* And solutions at the time were inefficient, complex, or had limited dynamic range. *See id.* at 1:66–2:30

To address these problems, the patent describes using a digital-to-digital converter (DDC) to convert the input data to an electrode-actuation pattern that more closely matches an ideal linear response. *Id.* at 7:40–45, 7:58–62. Because the conversion is efficiently performed in the digital domain, the invention can be used in high-frequency systems. *Id.* at 7:59–62.

C. Claims

Petitioner challenges claims 1 and 2, which are reproduced below.

1. A method of modulating and transmitting an optical signal over an optical fiber in response to N bits of digital data in parallel, the method comprising:

inputting the N bits of digital data into an optical modulator having a plurality of waveguide branches, where each branch has an input of an unmodulated optical signal;

converting the N bits of digital data to M drive voltage values, where $M > N$ and $N > 1$;

coupling the M drive voltage values to the unmodulated optical signal, said coupling enabling pulse modulation of the unmodulated optical signal, thereby generating a pulse modulated optical signal; and

transmitting the pulse modulated optical signals over an optical fiber.

Ex. 1001, 17:9–18:2.

2. A method of modulating and transmitting an optical signal over an optical fiber in response to N bits of digital data in parallel, the method comprising:

inputting the N bits of digital data into an optical modulator having a plurality of waveguide branches, where each branch has an input of an unmodulated optical signal;

converting the N bits of digital data to M drive voltage values, where $M > N$ and $N > 1$;

coupling the M drive voltage values to the unmodulated optical signal, said coupling enabling modulation of the unmodulated optical signal by QAM, thereby generating a QAM modulated optical signal; and

transmitting the QAM modulated optical signal over an optical fiber.

Id. at 18:3–18.

D. Evidence

Reference	Issued Date	Exhibit No.
US 7,277,603 B1 to Roberts	Oct. 2, 2007	1005
US 7,609,935 B2 to Burchfiel	Oct. 27, 2009	1008
Keang-Po Ho, Phase-Modulated Optical Communication Systems, 2005 (Ex. 1006)		

E. Asserted Grounds

Petitioner asserts that claims 1 and 2 would have been unpatentable on the following grounds. Pet. 21.

Claim(s) Challenged	pre-AIA¹ 35 U.S.C. §	Reference(s)/Basis
1, 2	103	Roberts
1, 2	103	Roberts, Ho
1, 2	103	Roberts, Burchfiel

F. § 314(a)

Under § 314(a), the Director has discretion to deny institution. In determining whether to exercise that discretion on behalf of the Director, we are guided by the Board’s precedential decision in *NHK Spring Co. v. Intriplex Technologies, Inc.*, IPR2018-00752, Paper 8 (PTAB Sept. 12, 2018).

In *NHK*, the Board found that the “advanced state of the district court proceeding” was a “factor that weighs in favor of denying” the petition under § 314(a). *NHK*, Paper 8 at 20. The Board determined that “[i]nstitution of an *inter partes* review under these circumstances would not be consistent with ‘an objective of the AIA . . . to provide an effective and efficient alternative to district court litigation.’” *Id.* (citing *Gen. Plastic*, Paper 19 at 16–17 (precedential in relevant part)).

“[T]he Board’s cases addressing earlier trial dates as a basis for denial under *NHK* have sought to balance considerations such as system efficiency, fairness, and patent quality.” *Apple Inc. v. Fintiv Inc.*, IPR2020-00019, Paper 11 at 5 (PTAB Mar. 20, 2020) (precedential) (collecting cases). *Fintiv* sets forth six non-exclusive factors for determining “whether efficiency, fairness,

¹ Congress amended § 103 when it passed the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (AIA), Pub. L. No. 112–29, § 3(c), 125 Stat. 284, 287 (2011). Here, the previous version of § 103 applies.

and the merits support the exercise of authority to deny institution in view of an earlier trial date in the parallel proceeding.” *Id.* at 6. These factors consider

1. whether the court granted a stay or evidence exists that one may be granted if a proceeding is instituted;
2. proximity of the court’s trial date to the Board’s projected statutory deadline for a final written decision;
3. investment in the parallel proceeding by the court and the parties;
4. overlap between issues raised in the petition and in the parallel proceeding;
5. whether the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same party; and
6. other circumstances that impact the Board’s exercise of discretion, including the merits.

Id. In the sections that follow, we discuss each factor.

1. Factor 1: whether the court granted a stay or evidence exists that one may be granted if a proceeding is instituted

“A district court stay of the litigation pending resolution of the PTAB trial allays concerns about inefficiency and duplication of efforts. This fact has strongly weighed against exercising the authority to deny institution under *NHK*.” *Id.*

Here, the district court has denied the motion to stay without prejudice to its refiling if the Board institutes. Ex. 2005. Petitioner argues that “the court merely referenced its ‘established practice’ of denying such stay requests before an IPR is instituted.” Reply 3 (citing Ex. 2005, 1). According to Petitioner, the district court emphasized in previous decisions to stay that the institution decision was due before the claim construction hearing.

Id. at 4 (citing *Uniloc USA, Inc. v. Google, LLC*, No. 2-17-cv-00231, Dkt. 47 at 2 (E.D. Tex. Oct. 3, 2017)).

But in this case, the claim construction hearing has been held. Ex. 2016, 4 (Amended Docket Control Order). To be sure, at the time that Petitioner filed its reply, the claim construction hearing was scheduled for May 19, 2020—one day after the institution decision’s due date. Ex. 2004, 3. The district court, though, later changed the hearing date to May 11, 2020. Ex. 2016, 4. Thus, Petitioner’s argument about a stay based on the claim construction hearing’s date has lost at least some of its merit. *See* Reply 4.

Regardless, Petitioner acknowledges that “it is unknown and entirely speculative at this point whether the case will be stayed or the trial date will be otherwise delayed.” *Id.*

On this record, we decline to speculate how the district court would rule on another stay request. A judge determines whether to grant a stay based on the facts in each case. Here, there is little evidence to suggest that the district court will grant a stay, should another one be requested. So this factor does not weigh in favor of or against discretionary denial.

2. *Factor 2: proximity of the court’s trial date to the Board’s projected statutory deadline for a final written decision;*

“If the court’s trial date is earlier than the projected statutory deadline, the Board generally has weighed this fact in favor of exercising authority to deny institution under *NHK*.” *Fintiv*, Paper 11 at 9.

According to the current record, the district court trial is scheduled to begin on December 9, 2020. Ex. 2016, 1. The Board may not issue a final decision in this proceeding until approximately May 2021—six months after the trial begins.

Because the trial date is substantially earlier than the projected statutory deadline for the Board’s final decision, this factor weighs in favor of discretionary denial.

3. *Factor 3: investment in the parallel proceeding by the court and the parties*

“The Board also has considered the amount and type of work already completed in the parallel litigation by the court and the parties at the time of the institution decision.” *Fintiv*, Paper 11 at 9. “[M]ore work completed by the parties and court in the parallel proceeding tends to support the arguments that the parallel proceeding is more advanced, a stay may be less likely, and instituting would lead to duplicative costs.” *Id.* at 10. For instance, Petitioner points out that the district court may base its decision to stay, in part, on whether the institution decision is due before the claim construction hearing. Reply 4 (citing *Uniloc USA, Inc. v. Google, LLC*, No. 2-17-cv-00231, Dkt. 47 at 2 (E.D. Tex. Oct. 3, 2017)).

At the time of this decision, the parties have spent months briefing the district court on the claim construction issues in the parallel proceeding. Ex. 2016, 4. Specifically, Petitioner filed its invalidity contentions in the parallel proceeding, including detailed claim charts that address the same prior art cited in the Petition. *See* Ex. 2008 (invalidity contentions); Ex. 2009 (chart). The parties submitted claim construction charts and briefs. Ex. 2016, 4; Ex. 2015 (Joint Claim Construction Statement). And a claim construction hearing was held on May 11, 2020. Ex. 2016, 4.

As for the remaining work, expert discovery is scheduled to be completed within two months. *Id.* at 3 (showing a deadline of July 20, 2020 for completing expert discovery). According to the current schedule, a jury

trial begins in seven months. *Id.* at 1. Similarly, the Board in *NHK* determined that the parallel proceeding in that case was in an “advanced state” when expert discovery was scheduled to end in less than two months and a jury trial was scheduled to begin in six months. *NHK*, Paper 8 at 20. In *NHK*, the Board found the case’s advanced state to be an additional factor that favored denying institution. *Id.* Here, we determine that the district court case is in a similar state and take this into account in our overall assessment of the investment that potentially remains.

To be sure, the district court has yet to issue a claim construction order or make other determinations on the merits. Considering the current investment in the invalidity and construction contentions, though, this factor weighs somewhat in favor of discretionary denial.

4. *Factor 4: overlap between issues raised in the petition and in the parallel proceeding*

“[I]f the petition includes the same or substantially the same claims, grounds, arguments, and evidence as presented in the parallel proceeding, this fact has favored denial.” *Fintiv*, Paper 11 at 12.

The claims involved in the district court proceeding are also challenged in the Petition. Pet. 21; Ex. 2009, 1 (Petitioner’s Invalidity Contentions). And both the Petition and Petitioner’s invalidity contentions in the parallel proceeding include obviousness rationales based on Roberts, alone and in combination with Ho or Burchfiel. *Compare* Ex. 2009, 1, *with* Pet. 21. In fact, Petitioner’s claim-invalidity chart in the parallel proceeding contains substantially similar assertions to those in the Petition. *Compare* Ex. 2009, 3–30 (chart), *with* Pet. 21–80 (§ XII Identification of How the Claims are Unpatentable).

Patent Owner argues that Petitioner has not shown that Roberts teaches or suggests the converting step recited in claims 1 and 2. *See* Prelim. Resp. 17–31. According to Patent Owner, the district court will hear and rule on the same arguments about the correct construction of “converting.” *Id.* at 11.

Indeed, all challenges in the Petition are based on Roberts. Pet. 21. So the meaning of “converting” is likely to be one of the central issues in this case. To resolve this issue, the Board would need to hear arguments about the correct construction of “converting,” which is one of the claim terms to be construed in the district court case. *See, e.g.*, Ex. 2015, 7–10 (Chart of Disputed Constructions). And both proceedings would likely involve similar arguments about Roberts. Ex. 2009, 12–16 (discussing “converting” in connection with Roberts). In at least these ways, the parallel proceedings would duplicate effort. This is an inefficient use of Board, party, and judicial resources and raises the possibility of conflicting decisions.

Because the Petition includes the same or substantially the same claims, grounds, arguments, and evidence as presented in the parallel proceeding, this factor favors exercising our discretion to deny institution.

5. *Factor 5: whether the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same party*

If the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same, this factor weighs in favor of discretionary denial. *Fintiv*, Paper 11 at 13–14.

Here, Petitioner is the defendant in the parallel litigation in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas in *Ramot at Tel Aviv University Ltd. v. Cisco Systems, Inc.*, No. 2:19-cv-00225 (E.D. Tex. filed

June 12, 2019). Pet. 8; Paper 4, 2 (Patent Owner's Mandatory Notice); *see also* Prelim. Resp. 10 (describing Petitioner's involvement the case). So this factor weighs in favor of discretionary denial.

6. Conclusion

All *Fintiv* factors weigh in favor of exercising our discretion to deny institution under § 314(a) except for one, which is neutral. We have reviewed the Petition and determine that its merits do not outweigh the *Fintiv* factors—especially considering the number of overlapping issues in district court, which strongly favors denial under factor 4, and the trial date, which is substantially earlier than the projected statutory deadline for the Board's final decision.

On balance, instituting would be an inefficient use of Board, party, and judicial resources. *See NHK*, Paper 8 at 20. Thus, efficiency and integrity of the system are best served by denying review. *See Consolidated TPG* at 58 (quoting 35 U.S.C. § 316(b)).

III. CONCLUSION

We exercise our discretion under § 314(a) to deny institution.

IV. ORDER

It is

ORDERED that the Petition is *denied*.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.,
Petitioner,

v.

RAMOT AT TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY LTD.,
Patent Owner.

IPR2020-00123
Patent 10,270,535 B1

Before CHRISTOPHER L. CRUMBLY, MONICA S. ULLAGADDI, and
JASON M. REPKO, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

CRUMBLY, *Administrative Patent Judge*, dissenting.

In my opinion, the case at hand does not present a situation in which it is appropriate for the Board to exercise its discretion to deny institution of trial. Post-grant proceedings under the America Invents Act, including *inter partes* reviews, were intended as an alternative to district court patent litigation that would be both faster and more efficient than an infringement suit. *See* H. R. Rep. No. 112-98, pt. 1, 48 (2011) (“purpose of the section [is] providing quick and cost effective alternatives to litigation.”); *see also* *Thryv, Inc v. Click-To-Call Techs., LP*, 140 S. Ct. 1367, 1374 (2020) (“By

providing for inter partes review, Congress, concerned about overpatenting and its diminishment of competition, sought to weed out bad patent claims efficiently.”). The majority’s decision today, following recent Board precedent, risks focusing only on the “faster” aspect of this goal, while sacrificing the “more efficient” aspect. In other words, the majority defers to a district court proceeding merely because it is currently scheduled to be faster than this *inter partes* review would be, without considering whether the Board may nevertheless be a more efficient venue. For the reasons discussed below, I respectfully dissent.

The majority’s analysis primarily focuses on an application of factors set forth in *Apple Inc. v. Fintiv, Inc.*, IPR2020-00019, Paper 11 at 5 (PTAB Mar. 20, 2020) (precedential), an order the Director recently designated as precedential. The “*Fintiv* factors” are precedential to the extent they identify considerations that should be relevant to the Board’s decision whether to deny institution under 35 U.S.C. § 314(a) in light of a copending district court proceeding. But I also note that *Fintiv* was an interlocutory order requesting further briefing from the parties on its factors (*id.* at 17); the panel did not actually apply those factors in the precedential order and there is no precedential “holding,” in the conventional sense of legal precedent.¹ Therefore, *Fintiv* does not control how we should apply its factors to the facts of this case, nor does it instruct us how to weigh the factors. And it is in this application and weighing of the factors that I disagree with the majority’s approach.

¹ The Board issued a decision denying institution of trial in *Fintiv* this week. IPR2020-00019, Paper 15. That decision has not been designated precedential and should be given the same weight as any other routine decision of the Board.

1. *Fintiv* Factor One

The first *Fintiv* factor is “whether the court granted a stay or evidence exists that one may be granted if a proceeding is instituted.” The majority correctly notes that the District Court here previously denied the Petitioner’s motion to stay pending the outcome of this *inter partes* review, but that the denial was based on the court’s “established practice” of denying stays prior to the Board’s determination whether to institute trial. And the court’s Order expressly notes that the Petitioner may refile its motion to stay “if and when IPR proceedings are instituted by the PTAB,” expressing its willingness to revisit the question. Ex. 2005, 2. As a starting point, the fact that the district court has expressed willingness to revisit the question of a stay is itself relevant, as the *Fintiv* panel noted, and has “usually” weighed against denial.

Nevertheless, the majority concludes that it is “speculative” whether the court will grant a stay if the motion is renewed, and therefore finds this *Fintiv* factor to be neutral. Of course, the question of whether a district court will grant a stay in any particular case is based on the facts of that case, and we cannot say with certitude what decision the court will reach when Petitioner renews its motion to stay. Indeed, Judge Gilstrap, the presiding judge in the district court proceeding here, has cautioned that “motions to stay are highly individualized matters and parties predict ongoing patterns from the Court at their peril.” *Image Processing Techs., LLC v. Samsung Elects. Co., Ltd.*, 2017 WL 7051628, *1 (E.D. Tex. Oct. 25, 2017). But that does not mean that assessing the likelihood of a stay in determining whether to exercise our discretion to deny institution of trial is a purely speculative exercise.

It is not speculation to look to the facts of this case, and the district court’s past practices in similar circumstances, to assess the likelihood of a

stay pending outcome of an *inter partes* review. Two of these facts—the stage of the district court proceeding, and the overlap of the issues between the proceedings—are separate factors under *Fintiv*, and I address them below under those factors. But these facts also, in my estimation, make it more likely that the court would stay the litigation while the *inter partes* review runs its course. *See Fintiv* at 6 (“there is some overlap among these factors. Some facts may be relevant to more than one factor.”).

Regarding the stage of the district court proceeding, the majority highlights the fact that the court’s claim construction hearing was originally scheduled for the day after our institution decision is due (May 19, 2020), but was recently modified to occur the week prior to our institution decision (May 11, 2020). I fail to see how this fact is especially relevant to whether the district court will grant a stay. Regardless of whether the court’s claim construction hearing has occurred, the court has not yet issued its opinion construing the claims. This has been relevant to the district court’s decision to stay cases in the past. *See Uniloc USA, Inc. v. Google, LLC*, No. 2-17-cv-00231, Dkt. 47, 2 (E.D. Tex. Oct. 3, 2017) (“No patent claims have been construed by the Court in these cases and discovery has barely begun.”). And in any event, even where the court has issued its claim construction order, Judge Gilstrap has granted motions to stay where appropriate. *See Image Processing Techs., LLC* at *2 (granting stay after entry of claim construction order). In my view, the occurrence of the claim construction hearing does not significantly diminish the likelihood of a stay, as the majority implies.

Rather, the facts of this case are dissimilar from cases in which Judge Gilstrap has found that the stage of the litigation weighed against a stay. For example, in *Intellectual Ventures I LLC v. T-Mobile USA, Inc.*, No. 2:17-cv-

00577, Dkt. 255 (E.D. Tex. Dec. 13, 2018), the court denied a stay due to the litigation's "advanced stage." But in that case, discovery and claim construction had concluded, the parties had filed expert reports and deposed those experts, and the court had decided several dispositive and *Daubert* motions. *Id.* at 6. Furthermore, at the time the court decided the motion, pretrial was *less than a month away*. *Id.* This is a far cry from the situation in the present case, and signals that the court is less likely to stay the litigation here.

The significant overlap in the invalidity challenges at issue in each proceeding, which the majority notes under the fourth *Fintiv* factor, also makes it more likely that the district court will grant a stay. In deciding whether to stay in view of a copending *inter partes* review, the district court frequently considers whether the stay will simplify the case before the court. *See NFC Techs. LLC v. HTC Am., Inc.*, 2015 WL 1069111, *2 (E.D. Tex. Mar. 11, 2015) (Bryson, J.). Relevant to this question is whether the claims challenged before the Board are the same as those asserted in the infringement trial, and the basis for those challenges. As the majority observes, Petitioner's claim invalidity chart in the district court is substantially similar to the grounds advanced in the Petition in this case. And I further note that the two other patents asserted before the district court in the litigation are challenged in separate petitions filed before the Board. *See* IPR2020-00122; IPR2020-00484. If we were to institute trial and reach a final written decision in these cases, we would likely simplify, if not resolve entirely, the invalidity issues the district court must address. This is an additional factor that makes a stay of the litigation more likely.

Finally, though it is not an explicit *Fintiv* factor, the Eastern District of Texas has in the past considered the diligence of the defendant in filing its

petitions for *inter partes* review in determining whether to grant a stay. For example, in *Trover Grp., Inc. v. Dedicated Micros USA*, 2015 WL 1069179, *3 (E.D. Tex. Mar. 11, 2015) (Bryson, J.), the court noted that the defendant waited nearly a year after the complaints were served to file its petition for *inter partes* review five days before the statutory deadline, and that this was months after the defendant had served its invalidity contentions. *Id.*; *cf.* *NFC Tech. LLC v. HTC Am., Inc.* 2015 WL 1069111, *4 (E.D. Tex. Mar 11, 2015) (delay of seven and one-half months in filing a petition not unreasonable, especially when it was less than four months after infringement contentions served). By contrast, the Petitioner here appears to have acted diligently in filing its *inter partes* review petition, less than five months after the service of the complaint and less than two months after receiving Patent Owner's infringement contentions. Paper 11, 5. And Petitioner did not even wait to serve its invalidity contentions before filing the instant Petition. Prelim. Resp. 10 (invalidity contentions served Nov. 15, 2019). All of these facts are likely to be considered by the district court as weighing in favor of a stay.

In sum, while we cannot say for certain whether the district court will grant a stay in this case, that is necessarily true of all cases where the court has denied a stay but indicated a willingness to revisit the issue. But that does not make evaluating the likelihood of such a stay a purely speculative endeavor. Based on the facts here, it is reasonably likely that the district court will grant a stay if we were to institute trial, and I would conclude that this *Fintiv* factor weighs strongly against denying institution.

2. *Fintiv* Factor Two

The second *Fintiv* factor takes into account the “proximity of the court’s trial date to the Board’s projected statutory deadline for a final

written decision.” The majority here notes that the current trial date set by the district court is December 9, 2020, while our final written decision will not be due until May 2021. My colleagues conclude that this weighs in favor of discretionary denial.

But the consideration of the “proximity” of the trial date cannot be as simple as comparing two dates on the calendar and determining which is first. Rather, we must take into account the entirety of the facts, which includes the likelihood that the district court will grant a stay. Obviously, if the litigation is stayed—an outcome I have concluded is a significant possibility—the trial date in December of this year will necessarily be pushed back, and will occur after the issuance of our final written decision. The majority does not take this possibility into account in finding that this factor counsel in favor of denial. But the likelihood of a stay significantly diminishes whatever weight this factor may have. As such, I would find that this factor, at best, weighs slightly in favor of denial.

3. *Fintiv* Factor Three

The third *Fintiv* factor considers the “investment in the parallel proceeding by the court and the parties,” with the goal of reducing duplication of effort between the two tribunals. Again, I believe the likelihood of a stay at the district court is relevant here, because it would necessarily eliminate any risk of duplicated effort going forward. But even without considering the likelihood of a stay, I disagree with the majority’s evaluation that the district court proceeding is at an “advanced stage.”

I agree with the majority that, in order to evaluate whether the “investment” in the parallel proceeding is significant enough to weigh against institution, we must look both backward, to the investment that has already been made, as well as forward, to the investment that will be

required if the litigation proceeds. In my view, it is only if the former outweighs the latter that we should consider this factor to favor denial.

The majority primarily looks backward, to the fact that invalidity contentions have been served, claim construction briefing has been completed, and the claim construction hearing held, as evidence of “investment.” But claim construction is one of the earliest stages of any district court patent infringement suit.² My colleagues only look forward to note that expert discovery closes in two months, and that a jury trial is scheduled in seven months, without taking into account the investment that will be required of the parties and the court during that period. There is no evidence here that the parties have submitted significant briefing on any dispositive issue, or that the court has made any determination on the merits. All of these events have yet to happen, and outweigh the investment to this point.

The majority also analogizes the present case to the situation presented in our precedential decision of *NHK Spring Co. v. Intri-Plex Technologies, Inc.*, IPR2018-00752, Paper 8 (PTAB Sept. 12, 2018) (precedential). But the *NHK Spring* analogy only gets us so far. While I recognize that both cases involve trial dates that are six to seven months away, and expert discovery periods that close in two months, the panel in *NHK Spring* found that this “advanced stage” of the proceeding was only enough to counsel for the denial of institution as an *additional factor* in

² Indeed, our Rules explicitly contemplate that the Board will often take up an *inter partes* review after a district court has construed the claims at issue—our recently-revised claim construction rule instructs us to take into account a prior claim construction determination made in a civil action. 37 C.F.R. § 42.100(b).

connection with its decision to deny under 35 U.S.C. § 325(d). Here, by contrast, the majority concludes that similar facts are sufficient to counsel for denial *on their own*. This is a significant broadening of the rationale of *NHK Spring*, and should not subsume a measured examination of the stage of the litigation.

I would not conclude on this record that the district court or the parties have made a significant investment in the district court proceeding, and would conclude that this *Fintiv* factor does not counsel in favor of denial.

4. *Fintiv* Factor Four

The fourth *Fintiv* factor examines the “overlap between issues raised in the petition and in the parallel proceeding.” I agree with the majority’s evaluation that the invalidity issues raised in the district court substantially overlap those raised by the Petition before us. But I disagree that this factor should weigh against institution when viewed in light of all of the facts. As discussed above, it is the very fact that there is significant overlap between the issues in the proceedings that makes it more likely that the district court will grant a motion to stay the litigation. The majority’s concern that the “the parallel proceedings would duplicate effort” and that this risks “the possibility of conflicting decisions” is only a concern if we presume that the district court will not stay the litigation. But, as discussed above, there is no basis for such a presumption, and we should not interpret this *Fintiv* factor so strictly that it creates a presumption that both cases will move forward concurrently.

Indeed, if the district court stays the litigation, there is likely no overlap between the issues presented in the proceeding, at all. If the outcome of the *inter partes* review is that all challenged claims are unpatentable, then there is nothing left for the district court to decide on the

question of infringement. On the other hand, if the Board upholds one or more claims, Petitioner is substantially constrained by the estoppels of 35 U.S.C. § 315(e)(2) in the invalidity arguments it can raise before the court, and it is likely that the court will only have to decide the question of infringement. Either way, overlapping issues are unlikely, and Congress' goal of providing an efficient alternative venue for resolving questions of patentability is achieved.

In light of these facts, I would find that the substantial overlap of issues between the district court proceeding and this *inter partes* review weighs against exercising our discretion to deny institution.

5. *Fintiv* Factor Five

The majority applies the fifth *Fintiv* factor as “if the petitioner and the defendant in the parallel proceeding are the same, this factor weighs in favor of discretionary denial.” Again, as *Fintiv* is an interlocutory order that did not apply its factors or weigh them, it does not set precedent beyond the definition of the factors themselves. But even setting that issue aside, I believe that the majority misinterprets the factor. The *Fintiv* order merely states that “[i]f a petitioner is *unrelated* to a defendant in an earlier court proceeding, the Board has weighed this fact against exercising discretion to deny institution under *NHK*.” *Fintiv* at 13–14 (emphasis added). In defining the factor, the order says nothing about situations in which the petitioner is the same as, or is related to, the district court defendant. The majority here simply presumes that, in such situations, the factor weighs in favor of denial of institution.³

³ To be fair, the majority is not alone among panels of the Board that have applied the factor in this manner. *See, e.g.*, IPR2020-00019, Paper 15, 15

My interpretation of the fifth *Fintiv* factor is that it only becomes relevant when the district court defendant and the petitioner before the Board are unrelated, in which case it weighs against denial of institution. In cases such as the one at hand, where the parties are the same, the factor is neutral. To hold otherwise—that the factor weighs in favor of denial if the parties are the same—would, in effect, tip the scales against a petitioner merely for being a defendant in the district court. But I see no basis for such a presumption, either in the text of the statute or in the intent of Congress in passing it. Indeed, it would seem to be contrary to the goal of providing district court litigants an alternative venue to resolve questions of patentability.

I would find that the fifth *Finitiv* factor is neutral in this case.

6. *Fintiv* Factor Six

The final *Fintiv* factor is a catch-all that takes into account any other relevant circumstances. Typically, the Board has looked at the strength of the Petitioner's unpatentability arguments under this factor, because especially strong arguments for patentability may outweigh the other factors. The majority, however, does not address the merits of Petitioner's grounds of unpatentability. While I interpret this to mean that the majority believes the unpatentability grounds in the Petition are not strong enough to outweigh the other factors, in the absence of an explanation I cannot agree or disagree with my colleagues' reasoning. But I need not venture into an evaluation of the merits here, because none of the other factors weigh strongly enough in favor of denial that assessing the merits is necessary.

(same party weighs in favor of denial); IPR2020-00106, Paper 17, 11 (same).

I would, however, consider the Petitioner's diligence in filing its Petition as an "other circumstance" under this *Fintiv* factor. Not only does considering the reasonableness of Petitioner's behavior encourage defendants to act diligently in filing their Petitions with the Board, it also helps ensure that a Petitioner who acts reasonably is not penalized for timing issues that are outside its control. As discussed above, the Petition in this case was filed within two months of receiving the Patent Owner's infringement contentions, and *before* the invalidity contentions were due to be served. It is difficult to see how the Petitioner could reasonably have been expected to file its Petition sooner; to hold otherwise would set an expectation that a Petitioner is expected to hazard a guess as to the claims that will be asserted by the Patent Owner and file a petition as to those claims in the hopes of avoiding a discretionary denial by the Board.

I would conclude that the sixth *Fintiv* factor, taking into account the diligence of the Petitioner, weighs against denial of institution.

7. Conclusion

I would weigh the various *Fintiv* factors as follows. In my evaluation, the only factor that arguably weighs in favor of denial is the second, and only slightly so. The first, third, fourth, and sixth factors weigh against denial, the first strongly so. And the fifth factor is neutral. Based on my assessment, I do not think the case at hand is one in which discretionary denial is appropriate.

But in a broader sense, I also take note of *Fintiv*'s statement that our evaluation of the factors should be based on "a holistic view of whether efficiency and integrity of the system are best served by denying or instituting review." *Fintiv* at 6. And in this sense, a weighing of individual factors aside, I cannot agree with the majority that denying institution here

best serves the efficiency and integrity of the patent system. The Petitioner here did exactly what Congress envisioned in providing for *inter partes* reviews in the America Invents Act: upon being sued for infringement, and having received notice of the claims it was alleged to infringe, it diligently filed a Petition with the Board, seeking review of the patentability of those claims in the alternative tribunal created by the AIA. And based on the facts of this case and the past practice of the district court in similar cases, it is likely that the district court litigation would be stayed if we were to decide to institute review, thereby increasing the efficiency of the system. The *inter partes* review would proceed, necessarily having a narrower scope than the infringement trial before the district court, and would resolve in an efficient manner the patentability questions so that the district court need not take them up. I fail to see how this outcome would be inconsistent with the “efficiency and integrity of the system.”

For these reasons, I respectfully dissent.

IPR2020-00123
Patent 10,270,535 B1

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CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

I hereby certify that this motion complies with the type-volume limitation of Federal Rule of Appellate Procedure 27(d)(2)(A). The motion is printed in Century Schoolbook 14-point font, and it contains 5,128 words, excluding the items listed in Federal Circuit Rule 32(b)(2).

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