

**Question for the Record from Senator Thom Tillis
For Eddie Lazarus of Sonos**

1. One very effective strategy that big tech companies and others use to gain and maintain their monopoly power is through the efficient infringement of the patents of innovative startups and smaller competitors. We have seen how this works through infringement cases brought by companies like Sonos and the cyber security company Centripetal. In each case, a cutting edge startup had to spend millions of dollars and many years to confront an entrenched incumbent that had simply taken their IP and used the current system of endless challenges at the PTO and legal maneuvers to slowly grind them down. This pattern has become standard operating procedure for big tech companies to kill off competition that should be coming from innovative new startups. Are there any changes to current law or additional tools that we can give innovative startups to better protect their patents and break this cycle of predatory IP infringement?