

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

TOUGHBUILT INDUSTRIES, INC.,
Petitioner

v.

MERIDIAN INTERNATIONAL CO., LTD.,
Patent Owner

Case IPR2025-01461
U.S. Patent No. 11,986,946

**DECLARATION OF WILLIAM H. MILLIKEN
IN SUPPORT OF ADMISSION *PRO HAC VICE***

Mail Stop "PATENT BOARD"
Patent Trial and Appeal Board
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

ToughBuilt EX1043
ToughBuilt v. Meridian
IPR2025-01461

I, William H. Milliken, declare as follows:

1. I am a member in good standing of the Bar of the District of Columbia and the Bar of Tennessee.

2. I have never been suspended or disbarred from practice before any court or administrative body.

3. I have never been denied when applying to practice law before any court or administrative body.

4. I have never been subject to sanctions or contempt citations imposed by any court or administrative body.

5. I have read and will comply with the Office Patent Trial Practice Guide and the Board's Rules of Practice for Trials set forth in Part 42 of 37 Code of Federal Regulations.

6. I will be subject to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Rules of Professional Conduct set forth in 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.101 *et seq.* and disciplinary jurisdiction under 37 C.F.R. § 11.19(a).

7. I have not been applied for admission *pro hac vice* or been recognized *pro hac vice* by order of the Patent Trial and Appeal Board in any proceedings in the last three years. The most recent prior proceeding in which I was recognized *pro hac vice* by order of the Patent Trial and Appeal Board is IPR2022-00743. *See* IPR2022-00743, Paper 11 (issued July 27, 2022). I have not subsequently been

denied permission to appear *pro hac vice* in a Board proceeding. Petitioner is concurrently filing a Notice of Intent to Designate me as back-up counsel in related proceeding IPR2025-01461.

8. I am an attorney at Sterne, Kessler, Goldstein & Fox PLLC and an experienced litigator.

9. I am an experienced patent litigation attorney whose practice focuses on patent litigation before the Patent Trial and Appeal Board, district court, and the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals. I began working as an attorney at Sterne Kessler in March of 2017. I have litigated patent cases in a variety of technology areas, and involving a variety of legal issues. I have assisted with *inter partes* review proceedings before the Office and patent-related district court actions. I have also served as lead counsel on several appeals at the Federal Circuit from *inter partes* review proceedings before the Office. Finally, I have written extensively about *inter partes* review proceedings and am versed in the statutory provisions, regulations, case law, and administrative guidance applicable to these proceedings.

10. Also, I have established familiarity with the subject matter at issue in this proceeding and related co-pending litigation. I have reviewed U.S. Patent No. 11,192,689 (“’689 Patent”), the relevant prior art, and the prosecution history and related patents. A significant amount of my time over the past year has been spent

working on issues related to the '689 Patent and related patents. Therefore, I have significant experience with the subject matter of this proceeding.

11. I have read and will comply with the Office Patent Trial Practice Guide and the Board's Rules for Practice for Trials set forth in part 42 of 37 C.F.R., and agree to be subject to the USPTO Rules of Professional Conduct set forth in 37 C.F.R. §§ 11.01 et seq., and to disciplinary jurisdiction under 37 C.F.R. § 11.19(a).

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true. I further declare that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of this proceeding.



William H. Milliken

Date: April 13, 2026

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