
IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

First Named Inventor:	B. Scott Maxfield	
Appln. No.:	18/490,715	Confirmation No.: 5970
Filing Date:	19 October 2023	Examiner: Shiref M Mekhaeil
Title:	MULTIFUNCTION BUTTON FOR LADDER ADJUSTMENT	Group Art Unit: 3634

DECLARATION UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.132

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P. O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

I, Paul B. Junius, declare that:

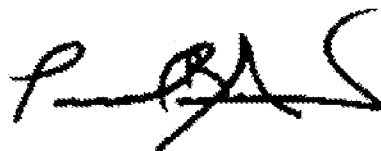
1. I reaffirm and reincorporate my previous declaration filed 25 July 2024 in the present application. It would not have been obvious to modify ladder hinge buttons to include tool hanging functionality in the manner recited by the current claims, at least because doing so would potentially increase a ladder manufacturer's exposure to product liability lawsuits. The disclosure of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2009/0229918 to Moss, which I have reviewed, does not change my professional opinion on this subject.

2. I attest that the ladder industry abstained from making accessories or usable top caps of any kind for standard stepladders for many years due to consumer safety concerns. At the time the present application was filed, there was skepticism in the field by experts, including myself, that tool hanging functionality could be viably and safely

incorporated into ladder hinge assemblies. Ladders incorporating the magnetic hinge button assemblies of the Moss reference affirmed that tool hanging functionality was not a readily solved problem for the industry. Accordingly, there was a disincentive in the field to modify hinge buttons to include tool hanging features, and a person having ordinary skill in the art would not have found it obvious to do so.

3. Additionally, I submit that I am not aware of any prior art ladder designs or products that added tool hanging functionality to ladder hinge assemblies in the manner described in the present application at or before the time the invention was made. This includes U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2009/0229918 to Moss since it does not add tool hanging functionality to ladder hinge assemblies in the manner described in the present application.

4. I further 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; and further 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 the above-referenced application or any patent issuing thereon.



Date: 11/26/2024

Paul B. Junius