

The Computer Science Education Act Strengthening K-12 Computer Science Education

Background

Computing is driving economic growth and societal change, and the field of computer science is underpinning these advances. It is clear that ensuring quality K-12 computer science education is crucial to America's competitiveness in the 21st Century. However, too few students have the opportunity to take engaging and rigorous computer science in K-12, and there is little diversity among those who do. Professional development for would-be or in-service teachers is inadequate. These are national failings – and ones the country can ill afford – as computing is central to our competitiveness in the global marketplace and our long-term economic growth.

Legislative Highlights

The Computer Science Education Act is needed to help catalyze reform in the states. The legislation would accomplish this through:

- *Planning grants* for states to work with stakeholders to assess their computer science offerings in K-12 and develop concrete steps to make them stronger.
- *Five-year implementation grants for states, in partnership with local school districts and institutions of higher education* to carry out state plans by: developing state computer science standards, curriculum, and assessments; improving access to underserved populations; developing professional development and teacher certification programs; developing on-line courses; and, ensuring computer science offerings are an integral part of the curriculum
- *A blue-ribbon commission* to review the national state of computer science education and bring states together to address the computer science teacher certification crisis.
- *Computer science teacher preparation programs* at institutions of higher education.
- *Independent, rigorous evaluation of state programs* funded under this Act with reporting back to Congress and the Administration

This legislation is supported by Computing in the Core, which is a new coalition formed to raise the national profile of K-12 computer science education. Its members are major stakeholders in the field of computing ranging from industry – **Microsoft, Google, Intel and SAS** – to non-profit organizations, including the **Association for Computing Machinery, Computer Science Teachers Association, National Center for Women and Information Technology, Computing Research Association, and the Anita Borg Institute for Women and Technology**. We are united in our commitment to improving computer science education and seeking the Computer Science Education Act's inclusion in reforms to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.