



The Honorable Bart Gordon
Chairman
House Committee on
Science and Technology
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Ralph Hall
Ranking Member
House Committee on
Science and Technology
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Gordon and Ranking Member Hall:

Thank you, your colleagues and your staff for the time and effort you have invested in developing a bill to reauthorize the landmark America COMPETES bill. The Association for Computing Machinery – the largest professional society in the world for computing professionals – strongly support policies that strengthen innovation. The current draft of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 would commit much needed resources into science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education and key federal research agencies.

As you are aware, our particular interest is in improving computer science education, especially in K-12 education. Computing opens limitless opportunities for students and is driving economic recovery and growth and societal change. The technologies that are our nation's engine depend on the field of computer science. Despite the extraordinary economic challenges facing the country, the outlook for computer science jobs remains strong. By 2018, more than 1.5 million high-end computing jobs will be created in the economy, making it one of the fastest growing occupational fields, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In addition, the innovations fueled by computing produce many more indirect jobs.

As this legislation moves through the legislative process, our primary concern is ensuring that computer science education is specifically part of programs intended to improve STEM education. Computer science is an integral part of STEM and underlies the advances we are seeing in most scientific disciplines. It is often mistakenly assumed that computer science is part of the STEM education being offered in K-12, yet we have surveyed the educational landscape and have found that is not the case. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your Senate colleagues to ensure the unique issues in K-12 computer science education are addressed.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Cameron Wilson at cameron.wilson@acm.org or (202) 659-9712.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Schnabel
Chair
ACM Education Policy Committee

Eugene Spafford, Ph.D., D.Sc.
Chair
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