

SUPPORTING COMPUTING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

April 21, 2006

The Honorable Dennis Hastert
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert,

As leaders and supporters of the computing research community, we write to express our concern that the proposed House Budget Resolution does not assume full funding for President Bush's American Competitiveness Initiative. We respectfully request that Congress embrace this initiative by fully funding the President's request in the budget resolution.

Numerous high-profile reports have pointed out the significant challenges that America faces from fierce and growing global competition. The President's plan recognizes the critical linkage between the federal investment in fundamental research and the rise in innovation that will be required to respond to these challenges. The President's call for increasing investment in basic research in the physical sciences represents a historic opportunity to secure the Nation's leadership in research in information technology and other physical sciences and help ensure America's future competitiveness.

The computing research field is a very concrete example of how federal investments in fundamental research drive economic growth. The field has a long history of creating revolutionary technologies that have enabled entirely new industries and driven productivity growth so critical to U.S. leadership in the new economy. A 2002 National Academies report found that federal support for computing research helped create 19 multibillion-dollar industries and made America the global leader in information technology. Further, several noted economists, including Alan Greenspan have cited the key role that information technology continues to play in driving U.S. productivity. Flat or declining agency budgets supporting computing research have created a significant concern within our community that we will cede these gains and our leadership by putting future innovation at risk.

The President's American Competitiveness Initiative provides more funding for the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy's Office of Science, and the core labs program at the National Institute of Standards and Technology. Each agency plays an important role in funding computing research. While the House Budget Resolution does increase funding for sciences broadly, it is not clear that the increase will be enough to fund the President's initiative. We specifically ask that the budget resolution allocate enough funding to ensure the President's proposal can be met during the appropriations process.

Thank you for considering our request. We look forward to working with you as the Budget Resolution and appropriations for these agencies move through Congress.

Sincerely,

The American Association for Artificial Intelligence (AAAI)
The Association for Computing Machinery, U.S. Public Policy Committee (USACM)
Cisco Systems, Inc.
The Coalition for Academic Scientific Computation (CASC)
The Computing Research Association (CRA)
The Electrical and Computer Engineering Department Heads Association (ECEDHA)
Intel Corporation
Microsoft Corporation
The Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM)