

## News Release

### For Immediate Release

SIIA PR Contact: Kevin King, Horn Group, 703.286.0814

ISTE PR Contact: Adele Cehrs, Live Wire Media Relations, 703.519.1600  
ext. 107

### **Education-Industry Coalition Petitions Congress for Increased School Technology Funding**

*Bipartisan Congressional Delegation Receives Petition with 7,000 Signatures  
Equating School Technology with National Competitiveness*

Washington, D.C. – July 12, 2006 – A coalition of national education and industry organizations, co-chaired by the Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) today presented Congress with a national petition signed by 7,000 educators and other stakeholders urging increased funding for the Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) initiative. Funding for the EETT is currently proposed for elimination in the pending U.S. House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill, while the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee is scheduled to vote July 18.

As part of their Mission Critical Campaign, these 30 coalition groups representing several million education stakeholders urge that Congress restore EETT funding to a minimum of \$496 million as provided in FY2005. The grassroots petition affirms this request, citing technology and e-learning as key ingredients for student success and future global competitiveness.

In accepting the petition, Senator Joseph I. Lieberman (D-Conn.) said, "At a time when national attention is focused on improving and strengthening our competencies in math, science, technology and engineering, it makes no sense to eliminate one of the few sources of funds for technology programs in our classroom. Around the country more and more states are recognizing the importance of these technology based education initiatives. It is time for the Bush Administration to take notice and support these programs on the federal level with adequate levels of funding."

Don Knezek, CEO of ISTE said, "We are asking that Congress fulfill its funding promises and leadership obligations to help modernize our educational practices to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The EETT program was included by Congress as a core provision of the landmark No Child Left Behind Act, because members of Congress realized that the law's goals and

requirements could not be met without the use of technology and related federal investment."

Added Ken Wasch, President of SIIA, "Information and communication technologies are integral to our society and our student's daily lives, yet a 2003 US Department of Commerce report found education last of 55 sectors of our economy in the intensity of technology use. This federal initiative is critical to ensure our students are afforded a learning environment that harnesses the power of technology to prepare them to compete in the world beyond the classroom."

At a news conference at 12:00 p.m. EDT today at the U.S. Capitol Building, the petition was formally presented to Senator Lieberman, Representative Thaddeus G. McCotter (R-Mich.), and Representative Ron J. Kind (D-Wisc.) by petition signatories Nina Hansen, Ed Tech Coordinator, Two Rivers Magnet Middle School, East Hartford and Past-President of the Connecticut Educators Computer Association (CECA), and Mary Jane Mielke, Director of Instructional Technology for the Wayne-Westland Community Schools in Westland, Michigan.

Rep. Kind, Co-chair of the New Democrat Coalition and Member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, added, "Education technology is critical to boosting student achievement in math, science, and engineering and absolutely vital to training the next generation of American scientists, engineers and technological innovators. The loss of these funds would effectively cripple our nation's efforts in training tomorrow's leaders and deliver a huge blow to our ability to compete in today's global economy."

Also receiving the petition and providing statements (available upon request) were Senator John Ensign (R-Nevada), Senator Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine), Representative Kay Granger (R-Texas), and Representative Mark Foley (R-Fla.).

Senator Snowe commented, "Increasing the Enhancing Education Through Technology funding is in keeping with our national goal of improving and strengthening our competencies in math, science and engineering. Students in classrooms throughout the country should have an opportunity to utilize modern tools to develop skills for the modern world. Technology reaches across geographic and cultural borders to bridge divides. It has been the greatest force of economic, social, and geopolitical change in the 21st century, and we should continue to promote its use by students of all ages."

### **About Mission Critical Campaign**

The Mission Critical Campaign (MCC) is a national campaign to advance technology as mission critical for K-12 education. The MCC is focused primarily on continued funding for the Enhancing Education Through Technology program (NCLB, Title II-D) and continuation of the E-rate program to meet the mission critical educational needs of students,

educators and parents. The following organizations support MCC's goal of increasing EETT funding to a minimum of \$496 million: Apple, Association of Educational Service Agencies, Consortium for School Networking, Council of Chief State School Officers, Cox Communications, Dell, Discovery Communications, EDUCAUSE, Federation of American Scientists, Florida Virtual School, Hewlett-Packard, Information Technology Association of America, Intel, International Society for Technology in Education, Juniper Networks, Microsoft, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Education Association, National School Boards Association, National Science Teachers Association, North American Council for Online Learning, PBS, SchoolNet, Inc., School Superintendents of Alabama, Software & Information Industry Association, State Educational Technology Directors Association, TechNet, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, United States Conference of Mayors. For more information, visit [www.missioncriticalcampaign.org](http://www.missioncriticalcampaign.org).

### **About SIIA**

The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) is the principal trade association for the software and digital content industry. SIIA provides global services in government relations, business development, corporate education and intellectual property protection to more than 800 leading software and information companies. For further information, visit <http://www.sii.net>.

### **About ISTE**

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) is a nonprofit professional organization with a worldwide membership of leaders in educational technology. ISTE is dedicated to providing leadership and service to improve teaching and learning by advancing the effective use of technology in K–12 education and teacher education. ISTE provides its members with information, networking opportunities, and guidance as they face the challenge of incorporating computers, the Internet, and other new technologies to transform schools.

### **About Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT)**

Authorized as Title II-D of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the EETT program enables schools to address core teaching and learning needs through technology. Funds are distributed through states to local school districts, with 50% allocated by Title I poverty-weighted formula and 50% by competition. EETT gives schools broad discretion to use program resources on a number of technology acquisition, enrichment and integration purposes aimed at improving student achievement and student technology access. Surveys show that districts target EETT funding for improving teacher quality, improving student achievement in reading and math, engaging in data driven decision making, and launching online assessment programs, among other uses. Authorized in NCLB at \$1 billion per year, EETT was funded at about \$690 million for its first three years in Fiscal Years 2002-2004, but was reduced to \$496 million in FY2005 and to \$272 million in FY2006.