

SIIA Public Policy News

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SIIA Commends President Obama for Supporting Innovation through Education Technology via Public-Private Partnership

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 8, 2011) – The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) commends President Obama for calling for education innovation through learning technologies, and for recognizing the important role played by technology and content companies in meeting these education needs. SIIA also called on Congress to support related investments, including both the Obama Administration’s ARPA-ED research proposal as well as funding for the Enhancing Education through Technology (EETT) program as needed to bring the researched learning technologies to teachers and students. The pending U.S. House-passed and Senate draft FY2011 Continuing Resolutions would eliminate funding for this program, in contrast to the technology-enabled innovation called for by the President.

“Learning technologies are engaging students, personalizing learning, and increasing educational productivity at a time when student expectations are higher than ever in today’s knowledge-based global economy,” said SIIA President Ken Wasch. “The high-tech industry is poised to help further meet these needs with the backing of public policies that incent commercial investment and aim to help the U.S lead the world in this emerging industry.”

“SIIA supports the Obama Administration’s proposal for an ARPA-ED focused on basic, pro-competitive research that advances the learning technology sector in ways that private investment alone may not support,” added Mark Schneiderman, SIIA’s senior director of education policy. “We call on the U.S. Congress to provide the matching research investment, and to also restore funding to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Enhancing Education through Technology program needed to prepare our education workforce to effectively deploy these learning technologies through the innovation of our traditional school model.”

The Obama Administration’s ARPA-ED proposal would provide \$90 million at the U.S. Department of Education for the creation of an Advanced Research Projects Agency – Education (ARPA-ED) with the goal of transforming education technology just as DARPA has transformed military technology. ARPA-ED would further catalyze the learning technology industry by: sponsoring the synthesis and vetting of public and private R&D efforts; identifying breakthrough development opportunities; shaping the next wave of R&D; investing in the development of new education technologies, learning systems, and digital learning materials; and identifying and transitioning the best and most relevant R&D from other federal agencies.

The Enhancing Education through Technology program – authorized as Title II-D of the No Child Left Behind Act – provides local school districts with need-based grants to improve teaching and learning through technology, including by providing professional development needed for our teacher workforce to effectively integrate technology into their classroom and instruction. The EETT program received

\$650 million in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, but the House-passed and Senate draft FY2011 Continuing Resolutions would eliminate funding for this program.

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 500 leading software and information companies. **The SIIA Education Division** serves and represents more than 150 member companies that provide software, digital content and other technologies that address educational needs. The Division shapes and supports the industry by providing leadership, advocacy, business development opportunities and critical market information. For more information, visit www.sii.net/education.

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