

For Immediate Release

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SIIA Joins Call for U.S. Action to Promote Cross-Border Data Flows

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Nov. 3, 2011) – The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA), the principal trade association for the software and digital content industries, today announced its endorsement of principles for promoting cross-border data flows. SIIA joined with the National Foreign Trade Council and other trade associations representing a broad range of U.S. companies in supporting this major business priority. The principles seek to bring to bear the resources of trade law to promote the global flow of data across national boundaries.

“American businesses are being harmed by the many barriers inhibiting the flow of data across international borders,” said Ken Wasch, President of SIIA. “Many countries want to impose restrictions on the transfer of data, while others seek to inhibit access by companies or individuals to lawfully available information located outside their jurisdiction. Still others demand that companies provide computing or information services through domestic facilities, in effect requiring localization of plant and equipment.”

“These practices inhibit economic growth, trade in services, innovation and the free expression of ideas in the global economy,” Wasch continued. “The principles endorsed by SIIA underscore the significance of the problem and encourage the U.S. government to seek remedies in a variety of international organizations. The forums where this problem can be addressed include the World Trade Organization (WTO), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, OECD, and regional trade negotiations such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership.”

“Our goal is to have the U.S. government treat these practices as violations of current international rules concerning digital goods, services and information,” Wasch concluded. “By joining with the rest of the U.S. business community in endorsing these principles, we are urging the U.S. government to identify these practices as violations of international rules and resolve them through WTO or bilateral consultations.”

The principles also address the important issues of intellectual property protection and limitations on liability for internet intermediaries. But rather than reinventing the wheel, the principles reference the approach contained in the Communiqué on Principles for Internet Policymaking related to intellectual property protection and limiting intermediary liability developed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in June 2011.

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. For further information, visit: www.sii.net.

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