

For Immediate Release:

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SIIA Applauds the FCC for its Vote today to Modernize the E-Rate

Enhanced Connectivity Needed to Provide Student Digital Learning Opportunities

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 19, 2013) – The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA), the principal trade association for the software and digital content industries, today commended the Federal Communications Commission for its vote to open a new rulemaking aimed at updating and enhancing the E-Rate. The vote follows President Obama's ConnectEd proposal last month to enhance highspeed broadband connectivity for the nation's schools and libraries.

SIIA President Ken Wasch commented: "The E-Rate program has been a critical means for the nation's schools and students to access the digital learning opportunities necessary for their success. SIIA applauds Acting Commissioner Clyburn and the Commission for their vote today to modernize and enhance the E-Rate program to better meet today's needs and to better support our nation's educational and economic competitiveness. SIIA looks forward to reviewing and responding as appropriate to the proposed rules to improve program efficiency and impact."

The E-Rate program provides discounts to public and private schools and public libraries for the purchase of telecommunications services, Internet access, and related networking equipment. The President's ConnectEd proposal calls for leveraging the E-Rate universal service program to within five years connect 99 percent of America's students through next-generation broadband (at speeds no less than 100Mbps and with a target of 1Gbps) to, and high-speed wireless within, their schools and libraries. E-Rate funding has been relatively flat at \$2.25 billion since its creation in 1996, while the need for, and the demand for connectivity has grown dramatically.

About SIIA

SIIA is the leading association representing the software and digital content industries. SIIA represents approximately 700 member companies worldwide that develop software and digital information content. Information technology (IT) and software security are critical issues to SIIA's members, many of whom strive to develop safe, secure and state-of the-art products that effectively serve their commercial and government customers alike, while protecting their intellectual property. For further information, visit www.siia.net.

