May 21, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: U.S. Industry Supports Passage of H.R. 1079 – CASES Act

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

We write to urge you to pass H.R. 1079, the “Creating Advanced Streamlined Electronic Services for Constituents Act of 2019” or the “CASES Act.”

This bipartisan, bicameral legislation was introduced by Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE) and Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) in the U.S. Senate and Rep. Garret Graves (R-LA) and Rep. Joseph Kennedy (D-MA) in the House. The legislation unanimously passed the House back in February of this year and was just approved by Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee.

The CASES Act would help bring congressional constituent services into the 21st Century by providing the public the option to use the Internet and specifically leverage electronic signature technology to authorize their U.S. Senator or U.S. Representative to conduct casework on their behalf. The bill also requires the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to issue guidance on electronic consent and access forms, specifically on how constituents will authenticate their identity when seeking constituent services. Ultimately, if the legislation becomes law and when OMB issues the guidance, members of the public will be able to use their mobile phones to request help from their congressional delegation.

Currently, constituents in need of assistance from the VA, Social Security, FEMA, Medicare, or other federal agencies in most cases must physically print, sign and fax, mail, or hand deliver a
“privacy release form” to their congressional offices before the office can act on their behalf. Unfortunately, in the case of a natural disaster, very often the only devices that works is a mobile phone. But, even beyond a natural disaster situation, it’s common sense to facilitate the legal document workflow use of electronic signatures to provide citizens with faster, more effective services.

We thank you for considering our views and we urge you to expeditiously pass this important bill into law.

Sincerely,

ACT | The App Association
BSA | The Software Alliance
CompTIA
Consumer Technology Association
Information Technology Industry Council
Software & Information Industry Association

CC: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House
    The Honorable Steny Hoyer, House Majority Leader
    The Honorable Kevin McCarthy, House Minority Leader
    The Honorable Jim Clyburn, House Majority Whip
    The Honorable Steve Scalise, House Minority Whip
    The Honorable Chuck Grassley, President Pro Tempore
    The Honorable John Thune, Senate Majority Whip
    The Honorable Dick Durbin, Senate Minority Whip
    The Honorable Ron Johnson, Chairman, Senate Homeland Security
    The Honorable Gary C. Peters, Ranking Member, Senate Homeland Security
    Margaret Weichert, Deputy Director, Office of Management and Budget