

CONGRESSIONAL AND INDUSTRY SUPPORT ANNOUNCED FOR LARSON'S EDUCATION-TECHNOLOGY BILLS

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CONGRESSIONAL AND INDUSTRY SUPPORT ANNOUNCED FOR LARSON'S EDUCATION-TECHNOLOGY BILLS WASHINGTON – Three legislative proposals offered by U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) aimed at training teachers in the use of modern technologies, bringing the computer skills of our youth into the community, and reviewing the best way to deliver high-speed, large bandwidth Internet capability to schools and libraries, received Congressional and industry support today during a Capitol Hill press conference.

Larson, who is a former teacher, began developing these three proposals immediately after arriving in Congress last year. He created these proposals because he believes, "in order to maintain America's position in the global stage, we must ensure that we adapt and stay ahead of the revolutionary technological advances that are changing our lives on a daily basis. America must provide technological infrastructure to our classrooms, technological opportunities for our children, and technological know-how to our teachers."

Industry supporters at today's event included Jonathan Zuck, President of the Association for Competitive Technology, which is an industry trade association dedicated to preserving the role of technology companies in shaping the future of the IT industry. In addition, Matt Dunne, President of AmeriCorps/VISTA, spoke about his organization's support of Larson's National Youth Technology Corps Act.

The Youth Technology Corps bill would use VISTA volunteers who are highly proficient in computer technologies to recruit and organize youth to implement and maintain computer systems for public schools, community centers, public senior centers, and libraries to teach students, teachers, and senior citizens and others how to use technology. Patterned after such noble and successful enterprises as AmeriCorps, the Technology Corps would blend technology and civic responsibility.

Larson's Science and Educational Networking Act aims to develop a strategic plan for the creation of a national technological infrastructure to connect public schools and libraries to the information superhighway. "What this bill does in a very direct sense is focus on the challenge that superintendents of schools are faced with on a daily basis: contending with Moore's Law. This law states that technology will eclipse itself every eight to twelve months. We need a pure, technical study of what's the best means to ensure that all of our children have access to the information superhighway. And whether it's by broad bandwidth or satellite, whether it's by radio wave or infrared, this is what the National Science Foundation and others will study and report back to us on," said Larson.

Citing the efforts of the United Technologies Research Center in East Hartford, Connecticut, which has been working with teachers in the East Hartford school system to train them in the latest computer technologies, Larson talked about his Alliance for Technologically Trained Teachers Act. This bill would provide tutoring for teachers in the uses of classroom technology, and for developing a comprehensive approach to provide technologically competent teachers to our nation's schools.

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