Supporting the Computer Science Education Act in the 113th Congress

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that in the year 2020, 50% of the 9.2 million jobs in the STEM fields will be in computing and information technology. That's 4.6 million jobs—lucrative, important and exciting jobs—waiting for those who choose to study computer science. Yet, in 2012, fewer than 3,000 of the country's 40,000 high schools offered the AP Computer Science exam. Teacher certification processes for computer science teachers are broken or nonexistent, making it difficult to establish and nurture computer science preparation programs or attract computer science talent to a profession that seemingly doesn't value computer science expertise. The K-12 system marginalizes computer science education and often federal, state and local polices present key barriers. We must remove these barriers and enable K-12 education to put students on a path to fill high-demand, high-skilled, high-paying computing jobs across all sectors of our economy.

The majority of education decisions are vested in state and local authority. The role of the Congress should be assisting states to develop and adopt effective K-12 education policies, not create barriers. Unfortunately, when it comes to computer science, barriers exist in K-12 legislation (the Elementary and Secondary Education Act), the Higher Education Act, and the authorization of the National Science Foundation. Federal funding supports programs considered part of a "core" set of subjects in the K-12 curriculum and, to date, that has not that included computer science.

Representative Susan Brooks (R-IN) and Jared Polis (D-CO) have led a group of bipartisan Members of the House of Representatives to introduce legislation to remove key federal policy barriers. ***The Computer Science Education Act*** would:

- Amend the statutory definition of "core academic subjects" to add computer science
- Define computer science
- Add computer science to the academic subjects addressed by federal teacher professional development programs

Simply put, this legislation would clarify that federal funds can be used to invest in computer science and support local and state educators who want to put computer science curriculum and teachers in schools. There is no cost to the federal government for this change, and it does not create new requirements for states or local education agencies.

See code.org or computinginthecore.org for partners and more information on computer science education, or contact:
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