I

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2417

To establish an educational technology extension service at colleges and universities.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 1, 1999

Mr. BARCIA (for himself and Mr. WU) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, and in addition to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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A BILL

To establish an educational technology extension service at colleges and universities.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Educational Technology Utilization Extension Assistance Act''.

SEC. 2. PURPOSE.

It is the purpose of this Act to improve the utilization of educational technologies in elementary and secondary education by creating an educational technology extension

service based at undergraduate institutions of higher education.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) Extension services such as the Manufacturing Extension Partnership and the Agricultural Extension Service have proven to be effective public/private partnerships to integrate new technologies and to improve utilization of existing technologies by small to medium sized manufacturers and the United States agricultural community.

(2) Undergraduate institutions of higher education working with non-profit organizations, State, and Federal agencies can tailor educational technology extension programs to meet specific local and regional requirements.

(3) Undergraduate institutions of higher education, often with the assistance of the National Science Foundation, have for the past 20 years been integrating educational technologies into their curricula, and as such they can draw upon their own experiences to advise elementary and secondary school educators on ways to integrate a variety of educational technologies into the educational process.

(4) Many elementary and secondary school systems, particularly in rural and traditionally under served areas, lack general information on the most effective methods to integrate their existing technology infrastructure, as well as new educational technology, into the educational process and curriculum.

(5) Most Federal and State educational technology programs have focused on acquiring educational technologies with less emphasis on the utilization of those technologies in the classroom and the training and infrastructural requirements needed to efficiently support those types of technologies. As a result, in many instances, the full potential of educational technology has not been realized.

(6) Our global economy is increasingly reliant on a workforce not only comfortable with technology, but also able to integrate rapid technological changes into the production process. As such, in order to remain competitive in a global economy, it is imperative that we maintain a work-ready labor force.

(7) According to ''Teacher Quality: A Report on the Preparation and Qualifications of Public School Teacher'', prepared by the Department of Edu-

cation, only 1 in 5 teachers felt they were well prepared to work in a modern classroom.

(8) The most common form of professional development for teachers continue to be workshops that typically last no more than one day and have little relevance to teachers' work in the classroom.

(9) A 1998 national survey completed by the Department of Education found that only 19 percent of teachers had been formally mentored by another teacher, and that 70 percent of these teachers felt that this collaboration was very helpful to their teaching.

SEC. 4. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.

(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in cooperation with the Secretary of Education and the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall provide assistance for the creation and support of regional centers for the utilization of educational technologies (hereinafter in this Act referred to as ''ETU Centers'').

(b) FUNCTIONS OF CENTERS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—ETU Centers may be established at any institution of higher education, but such centers may include the participation of non-profit entities, organizations, or groups thereof.

(2) OBJECTIVES OF CENTERS.—The objective of the ETU Centers is to enhance the utilization of educational technologies in elementary and secondary education through—

(A) advising of elementary and secondary school administrators, school boards, and teachers on the adoption and utilization of new educational technologies and the utility of local schools' existing educational technology assets and infrastructure;

(B) participation of individuals from the private sector, universities, State and local governments, and other Federal agencies;

(C) active dissemination of technical and management information about the use of educational technologies; and

(D) utilization, where appropriate, of the expertise and capabilities that exists in Federal laboratories and Federal agencies.

(3) ACTIVITIES OF CENTERS.—The activities of the ETU Centers shall include the following:

(A) The active transfer and dissemination of research findings and ETU Center expertise to local school authorities, including but not

limited to school administrators, school boards, and teachers.

(B) The training of teachers in the integration of local schools existing educational technology infrastructure into their instructional design.

(C) The training and advising of teachers, administrators, and school board members in the acquisition, utilization, and support of educational technologies.

(D) Support services to teachers, administrators, and school board members as agreed upon by ETU Center representatives and local school authorities.

(E) The advising of teachers, administrators, and school board members on current skill set standards employed by private industry.

(c) PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) PROPOSED RULES.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, after consultation with the Secretary of Education and the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall publish in the Federal Register, within 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, a pro-

posed rules for the program for establishing ETU Centers, including—

(A) a description of the program;

(B) the procedure to be followed by applicant;

(C) the criteria for determining qualified applicants; and

(D) the criteria, including those listed in the following sections, for choosing recipients of financial assistance under this section from among qualified applicants.

(2) FINAL RULES.—The Director of the National Science Foundation shall publish final rules for the program under this Act after the expiration of a 30-day comment period on such proposed rules.

(d) ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION.—

(1) APPLICATIONS REQUIRED.—Any undergraduate institution of higher education, consortia of such institutions, non-profit organizations, or groups thereof may submit an application for financial support under this section in accordance with the procedures established under subsection (c). In order to receive assistance under this Act, an applicant shall provide adequate assurances that will contribute 50

percent or more of the proposed Center's capital and annual operating and maintenance costs.

(2) SELECTION.—The Director of the National Science Foundation, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education and the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, shall subject each application to competitive, merit review. In making a decision whether to approve such application and provide financial support under this section, the Director of the National Science Foundation shall consider at a minimum—

(A) the merits of the application, particularly those portions of the application regarding the adaption of training and educational technologies to the needs of particular regions;

(B) the quality of service to be provided;

(C) the geographical diversity and extent of service area, with particular emphasis on rural and traditionally underdeveloped areas; and

(D) the percentage of funding and amount of in-kind commitment from other sources.

(3) EVALUATION.—Each ETU Center which receives financial assistance under this section shall be evaluated during its third year of operation by an

evaluation panel appointed by the Director of the National Science Foundation. Each evaluation panel shall measure the involved Center's performance against the objectives specified in this section. Funding for an ETU Center shall not be renewed unless the evaluation is positive.

SEC. 6. DEFINITION.

As used in this Act, the term ''institution of higher education'' has the meaning given that term by section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

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