

107TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 295

Urging the establishment of a commission on technology and education.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 27, 2001

Mr. FERGUSON (for himself and Mr. DAVIS of Illinois) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

RESOLUTION

Urging the establishment of a commission on technology and education.

Whereas elementary and secondary schools in the United States need to prepare students for the 21st century and an economy that requires an educated and skilled workforce, with an increasing focus on technology as a central component;

Whereas there is widespread concern about the poor academic performance of United States students relative to their counterparts in many other industrialized nations;

Whereas this anxiety about the academic competitiveness of United States students, coupled with changes in needed work skills, has heightened interest in integrating technology into the curricula of elementary and secondary schools;

Whereas there are 8.2 million instructional computers in the Nation's elementary and secondary schools, with approximately 5 million additional multimedia computers needed;

Whereas elementary and secondary schools need \$128 billion of infrastructure work, related specifically to the incorporation of technology in the classroom;

Whereas the resources of elementary and secondary schools are limited and the overall financial cost of acquiring, maintaining, and using technology in schools, though significant, remains unknown;

Whereas after nearly 2 decades of technological development, the extent to which elementary and secondary schools provide students with continuing and effective access to new information technology still remains limited, making it difficult to realize current technology's educational benefits;

Whereas despite gains in the ratio of computers to students, the average computer in the Nation's elementary and secondary schools is 7 years old, illustrating the sizable stock of outdated technology in many of these schools;

Whereas a recent survey by National Center for Education Statistics concluded that only 20 percent of American teachers feel prepared to use new computer applications and know how to integrate them into their classrooms;

Whereas there is no single authority directing or coordinating technology in education and the General Accounting Office reports that there are 35 Federal programs administered by eight different agencies that could support telecommunications and information technology programs at local elementary and secondary schools;

Whereas the administration has recommended a single program that will facilitate comprehensive and integrated education technology strategies that target the specific needs of individual elementary and secondary schools;

Whereas the Department of Education is currently conducting an integrated study on educational technology, to be released in spring 2002, that is designed to aid policymakers to fill the gaps in educational technology in the Nation's elementary and secondary schools;

Whereas the integrated study on educational technology will measure the current state of the financial and technical support for the implementation of educational technology, including the influence of the Technology Literacy Challenge Fund established pursuant to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) and the so-called E-Rate program under subsections (b)(6) and (h) of section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 254) for providing discounted telecommunications services;

Whereas the integrated study on educational technology will pinpoint which local educational agencies have benefitted from a variety of existing programs, as well as the role of these programs in supporting effective use of educational technology for improved teaching and learning;

Whereas the integrated study on educational technology will assess the current state of professional development in educational technology and the circumstances under which professional development in the instructional use of technology results in improvements in teaching and learning;

Whereas the integrated study on educational technology will provide policymakers and program managers with the information needed to inform future decisionmaking about Federal investments in educational technology;

Whereas the administration has asserted that elementary and secondary schools should use educational technology as a tool to improve student academic achievement and that using the latest technology in the classroom should not be an end in itself; and

Whereas a team of specialized experts could best coordinate national educational technology policies and objectives, since the nature of technology itself, which grows at exponential rates, hinders a deliberative body from being able to devote the necessary time and resources to monitor these developments: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives urges
 2 the creation of a commission on technology and education
 3 that would—

4 (1) provide clear and focused goals for the fu-
 5 ture of classroom educational technology and make
 6 recommendations to efficiently implement technology
 7 to accomplish these goals;

8 (2) make recommendations to improve and ex-
 9 pand programs that train both educators and stu-
 10 dents to use educational technology;

11 (3) to promote local control over the implemen-
 12 tation of education technology in local elementary
 13 and secondary schools; and

- 1 (4) be comprised of education and technology
- 2 stakeholders, including educators, academics, par-
- 3 ents, industry leaders, and policymakers.

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