

PRAISE FOR THE NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

(Mr. BOEHLERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, I just want to compliment the House on the action just completed. The Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Act is very important legislation. It will maintain the U.S. global leadership in information technology. When one is the first and one is the best, one has to work at maintaining that first place position, at securing the fact that one legitimately is the very best.

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The \$500 billion a year information technology industry has accounted for one-third of our Nation's economic growth since 1992, and created new industries and millions of new high-paying jobs. All across America people are benefiting from what has been done in information technology.

Once again, we are the leader, we are first, we are the best, and we have to work at maintaining that. We have to prioritize basic information technology research. There are a whole slew of very good ideas, but we have to have priorities. We have to go first with that which is most important. We have to produce the next generation of highly-skilled information technology workers.

This bill will help attract more students to science and to careers in information technology by providing grants for colleges and companies to create for-credit courses which include internships. Participating companies must commit to providing 50 percent of the cost of the program.

So for a whole host of very legitimate reasons, the Committee on Science and this House have done themselves proud. We are moving forward, we are not just satisfied to rest on our laurels. We are going forward. This is, indeed, the Information Age, and we are the leaders. We have to maintain that position.

I am a great unabashed baseball fan, and on the 17th of this month, just a couple of days hence, the pitchers and catchers will report to spring training. The one team that I am most interested in is the New York Yankees, because they are the world champions.

If I may draw an analogy, let me point out that the Yankees are not resting on their laurels, they are continuing to improve and invest in their club. That is why they are the world champions, and we cannot afford to rest on our laurels.

I thank my colleagues for their unrelenting support of this bill. I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Chairman

SENSENBRENNER) for the leadership he has provided. I thank the ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL) for his strong support and leadership.

This is truly bipartisan legislation serving the best interests of the American people.

IN OPPOSITION TO CAPUANO AMENDMENT NO. 1 AND NO. 3 TO H.R. 2086, NETWORKING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

(Mrs. BIGGERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the amendment that was just offered by my colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO) concerning the Department of Energy and National Science Foundation.

There is no doubt that the National Science Foundation should be commended for their fine work in making research funds, including those for information technology research. Their record of accomplishment is impressive, and certainly qualifies them for increased responsibilities. That is why I was a cosponsor of this bill that we are going to be considering later on, or voting on.

While I support the bill and the increased NSF funding, I nonetheless strongly oppose that amendment because, while very generous to NSF, much of the more than \$3 billion provided by this bill is newly authorized funding, yet this provides no new funding for the Department of Energy's programs, and the amendment that was considered would further erode, if not eliminate, such programs.

Would we cut off funds for such research by the Department of Energy and the laboratories strictly by virtue of the agency that oversees it? It is unfortunate that neither I nor other Members of the Committee on Science were given the opportunity to discuss the IT research successes of the Department of Energy when the bill was marked up by the committee in September, but the sponsor of this amendment, my colleague on the Committee on Science, did not offer the amendment at that time.

This amendment seriously jeopardizes many of the basic research collaborations, and will ensure that DOE has no role in the future of information technology research. I do not believe that this is a prudent course for us to take today, and I am sorry that I was not here to speak against that amendment. I do want to voice my displeasure with that.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the amendment offered by my colleague from Massachusetts.

There is no doubt that the National Science Foundation should be commended for their fine work in managing research funds, including those for information technology research. Their record of accomplishment is impressive, and certainly qualifies them for increased responsibilities.

That's why I am a cosponsor of the legislation that would give the National Science Foundation the lead in this federal I.T. research initiative, and provide almost \$3 billion for the NSF's information technology research activities.

While I support the bill and increased NSF funding, I nonetheless strongly oppose this amendment. The NSF's fine record of accomplishment is no excuse to cut in half the Department of Energy's information technology research programs. The two are not mutually exclusive; they are, in fact, complementary.

This bill is very generous to the NSF; much of the more than \$3 billion provided by this bill is newly authorized funding. Yet this bill provides no new funding for the Department of Energy's programs, and the amendment we are considering right now would further erode—if not eliminate—such programs.

The DOE is engaged in significant computing research and development. DOE's research has led to important advances in the field of information technology, especially in the area of parallel computing. The DOE is also involved in the development of highly advanced computer "technology tools" which allow scientists to model and analyze complex scientific problems and collaborate with other researchers to meet national needs.

DOE-supported computational research provides many benefits to the broader research community. In my own district, computer scientists at Argonne National Laboratory developed an extremely high performance "computational kernel" for use in a wide range of simulations, from petroleum reservoir modeling to understanding air flow over the surface of a wing. Two of the four 1999 Gordon Bell Awards were given to Argonne researchers for applications using this computational kernel. The Gordon Bell Award is the most prestigious award in the application of parallel processing of scientific and engineering problems.

Would we cut off funding for such research strictly by virtue of the agency that oversees it?

Software developed by Argonne for the reconstruction of metabolic pathways is being provided on a Website available to the community of biological researchers. The software is widely used in such applications as establishing the function of proteins, and for simulating the functional behavior of higher organisms. In awarding the developers, Genetic Engineering News called the Website one of the most useful in biological science.

Again, should such work be ended strictly because another parent agency is the target of our funding largesse?

It is unfortunate that neither I nor other Members of the Science Committee were given the opportunity to discuss the IT research successes of the Department of Energy when this bill was marked up by the Committee in September. But the sponsor of this amendment, my colleague on the Science Committee, did not offer his amendment at that time.