



April 15, 2015

The Honorable Al Franken
309 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Franken,

Thank you for your work to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and for your commitment to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. Microsoft supports your amendment to Title II of the *Every Child Achieves Act of 2015* to improve student access to high quality STEM instruction.

Companies across America need highly-skilled workers to fill open STEM jobs. Even in times of high unemployment, companies seek to employ talented American graduates, but in recent years this has been a very difficult undertaking. Today there is a substantial and increasing shortage of individuals with the skills needed to fill the jobs the private sector is creating, especially certain STEM jobs. We need to strengthen our STEM pipeline to better prepare our students for these jobs.

The Franken Amendment to Title II will provide much needed support to elementary and secondary schools to improve STEM teaching and learning. We truly believe that small investments in STEM access, instruction, professional development for teachers and support for teacher recruitment, mentoring and induction services are critical and will help our students and our company to compete in a global economy.

In addition, as the process for reauthorization continues we feel it is imperative to support efforts to further strengthen STEM education, including computer science education. Computer science courses in K-12 education are disappearing from the national landscape at the very time they are needed most given the skills requirements of employers to secure these high paying IT jobs. I look forward to working with you and the rest of the Committee on this issue as the bill moves forward.

Thank you again for your work on this important issue. If you have questions or would like additional information about Microsoft's work to improve STEM education for students please contact Allyson Knox at allyknox@microsoft.com.

Sincerely,

Allyson Knox
Director of Education Policy and Programs
US Government Affairs
Microsoft