



**Excerpts of U.S. Senators' Remarks on Computer Science
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee Markup
June 9, 2016**

Senator Steve Daines (R-MT): Mr. Chairman, thank you and I want to thank Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray for putting together a strong bipartisan bill. I appreciate the efforts made around Title 4 education funding, however I believe there are significant skill gaps in this country regarding the area of computer science and the impact this field of study has across all sectors of our economy and I think we need to be looking for modest, but dedicated resources for computer science education.

I spent 12 years in the software business, it's a source of good, high-paying jobs. I recently came back from China - it's clear that if the U.S. is going to remain competitive in today's global and ever changing economy, we're going to need to invest in computer science education.

Here's a fact: there are 500,000 computing jobs currently unfilled in this nation today. We graduated 50,000 computer science grads. It's an order of magnitude gap. I understand this is an issue with support of both sides of the aisle and I'd like to continue working with the Chair and Ranking Member as we move forward. Thank you.

Senator John Hoeven (R-ND): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do want to commend the work of both Senator Blunt and Senator Murray. I appreciate the Title 4 funding they've got in there, but I do want to emphasize the need for more funding for computer science and I'd like to see it go out in a Title 4 type approach.

Two school districts - we have a tremendous shortage in terms of the number of graduates in computer sciences. There are more than 500,000 computing jobs currently unfilled in the United States. Last year we graduated 50,000 individuals with computer science degrees. A report from the Center for Strategic and International Studies stated quote, "there are only about 1,000 security specialists in the United States who have the specialized skills to operate effectively in cyberspace, however the United States needs about 10,000-30,000 such individuals," something that I see directly working with DHS appropriations budget.

So I just want to emphasize that we need to continue to work in this area, and I would ask both the chairman of the subcommittee and the ranking member to work with me on this important issue. Thank you.

Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman, and congratulations Chairman and Ranking Member for their work and the co-chairs of the subcommittee - well done.

A couple quick points, I want to echo the points that Senator Hoeven and Senator Daines have made on computer science, that's certainly very important, and I hear a lot from companies like Intel, in my home state, about the substantial, unmet demand that we need to invest more in and the tremendous value of these jobs to our economy – to those who hold those jobs and certainly to our competitiveness internationally.

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK): Thank you Mr. Chairman and I too want to offer my thanks and appreciation for the good work by the committee chair and ranking member on this significant bill in front of us. Lot of good comments about the merits of Title 4 and what that allows us to do given greater flexibility within the block grant program for Every Students Succeed Act. Those of us that are on the HELP committee I think recognize that there was a lot of hope that was put into Title 4 and why we authorize pretty significant funding - 1.6 billion dollars – for the block grant program.

And recognizing that whether it helps with computer science as several of our colleagues have noted here today or the other ways in which we really empower schools to meet local needs for providing a very well-rounded education and safer and healthier schools. So everything from college to career guidance to suicide prevention, teen dating violence prevention, music, art, STEM, computer sciences, things to deal with safety in the schools that would prevent bullying, to use technology effectively. Just about everything you could think of, again, that allows for the flexibility to make our schools safe and to really help to empower our students.

I know that we're dealing with all kinds of different priorities and recognizing that everything that we're trying to do costs money there are resources that we have to find acceptable offsets to help pay for. I have been working with colleagues to try to increase the amount and I thank you for that. We haven't gotten to the place that I would like, but I would hope that we could do better, perhaps find some additional offsets by the time the bill comes to the floor so that we can address some of the issues that have been raised here at this mark-up, but you can count me as one of the ones that is very interested in seeing the success of the Title 4 block grant programs moving forward. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Senator Patty Murray (D-WA): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. And I just want to thank the, first of all thank Senator Daines and Hoeven who raised the issue of computer science, extremely important that we educate our kids with those skills and look forward to working with you and other members who have mentioned that as well.

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Note: Not an official transcript