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ACM Hails New "Every Student Succeeds" Law

Sweeping Legislation Will Bolster Computer Science in K-12 Education

NEW YORK, NY, December11, 2015 – ACM, the world's leading computing society, today praised the enactment of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) into law as an important and historic step forward for K-12 education in the United States. The new law recognizes that computer science is a fundamental academic subject, along with reading and writing, vital to a "well-rounded" education in the 21st century. The increased emphasis on providing early and ongoing exposure to computer science and connecting it as part of learning in other curriculum areas will bring long-lasting benefits for our workforce, economy, and society.

The language of the new law references computer science within its STEM provisions, including its definition of STEM specialty schools. Importantly, ESSA will also open up new avenues for the training and professional development of computer science education teachers. These avenues include:

- Provisions of the new law allow Title IV funding to be used for informal computer science education opportunities at the state and district level, as well as professional development for teachers in the uses of technology.
- New avenues and funding have been established for STEM Master Teacher Corps and STEM professional development.
- State Teacher Quality Block Grants support STEM professional development.

"Having computer science explicitly written into the new Every Student Succeeds Act represents an important milestone," explains ACM CEO Bobby Schnabel. "In the 2010 report Running on Empty, ACM and the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA) proposed that computer science should be included as a core subject across US primary and secondary

schools. ESSA demonstrates that this goal, which appeared audacious not many years ago, has now entered the mainstream."

Jeffrey Forbes, the Chair of the ACM Education Policy Committee (EPC), added that the new law takes steps in the direction of fostering greater access to computer science education. "As with the No Child Left Behind law that it replaces, a major goal of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is to close achievement gaps for students," says Forbes. "ESSA makes a number of significant improvements to expand access to computer science education by diverse populations in urban, suburban, and rural areas."

With bipartisan support, the bill passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 359 to 64 and the Senate by a vote of 85 to 12. President Obama signed the bill into law on December 10, 2015.

To address a growing need for qualified computing professionals in the US economy, ACM produced Rebooting the Pathway to Success: Preparing Students for Computing Workforce Needs in the United States. The 2014 report evaluated US computer science education and workforce landscape on a state-by-state basis. It called on education, business and policy leaders in every state to take immediate action aimed at filling the pipeline of qualified students pursuing computing and related degrees, and to prepare them for the 21st-century workforce.

About ACM
ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery, is the world's largest educational and scientific computing society, uniting computing educators, researchers and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources and address the field's challenges. ACM strengthens the computing profession's collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development, and professional networking.

About the ACM Education Policy Committee
The ACM Education Policy Committee (EPC) engages policymakers and the public on public policy issues that relate to computer science and computing-related education, including the importance of high-quality education at all levels to the labor market and the economy.

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