



January 30, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Republican Leader McConnell,

EDUCAUSE, the association of over 2,200 colleges and universities that promotes information technology in higher education, and Internet2, a coalition of over 200 universities that engage in advanced networking, applaud the draft economic stimulus legislation under consideration by the Senate. EDUCAUSE and Internet2 have long argued for expanding and improving broadband infrastructure as a way to extend the benefits of higher education and thus increase economic opportunity and quality of life for all Americans. The bill clearly demonstrates a commitment to achieving this objective as well as the foresight to further enhance the opportunities for research, learning, and health care.

In particular, we are pleased that the legislation includes:

- funding for grant programs and other measures to expand the reach of high-speed, broadband Internet access to urban, suburban, and rural areas;
- funding for infrastructure improvements to improve higher education facilities;
- funding for expanding National Science Foundation (NSF) research;
- funding for the National Institute of Standards and Technology;
- funding for public colleges and universities via the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund; and
- funding to jumpstart the computerization of health records.

Finally, EDUCAUSE and Internet2 would specifically like to commend the authors of the bill for ensuring that broadband networks receiving federal funding operate under nondiscrimination and network interconnection principles. Higher education engages in significant instructional and research activities that require broadband networks. It is extremely important that government policies preserve the openness of these networks to ensure that all Americans may fully realize the benefits of higher education's services and resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Diana Oblinger'.

Diana Oblinger
President and CEO
EDUCAUSE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Douglas E. Van Houweling'.

Douglas E. Van Houweling
President and CEO
Internet2