

JOHN B. LARSON

FIRST DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON BASIC RESEARCH

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE AND AERONAUTICS



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0701

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<http://www.house.gov/larson>

February 24, 2000

Mr. Andrew Rotherham
Special Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. Rotherham:

I am writing to inform you of an initiative that I am proposing to ensure that America is prepared to confront the challenges that threaten the nation's position as the world's preeminent military, economic and cultural leader in the twenty-first century.

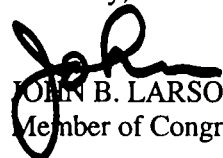
From a strategic standpoint, the future of our nation's preeminent status is grounded in the implicit understanding that our national defense, economic prosperity, and educational quality are inextricably linked. There are alarming signals that point towards a systemic problem threatening the future leadership of this nation and its ability to compete as a world economic and military leader. The growing digital divide between the information "haves" and the "have nots", the number of unfilled high-tech jobs in this country, as well as problems in military recruiting and retention are both consequences of a much more fundamental change taking place in this country and around the world.

Simply stated, if we are not properly educating the future caretakers of this nation—our children—they will not be able to compete in a global digital economy and America will not be able to sustain its global leadership. Therefore, in order to provide 21st century opportunities to *all* of our children, I believe a coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive approach that cuts across the bureaucratic quagmire that impedes visionary thinking is needed. I believe we need the equivalent of a technological Marshall Plan, which is why I have been working on a proposal that I call the Strategic, Education, Economic, and Defense System (SEEDS) with Representative Murtha and Representative Skelton.

I have included for your review a copy of a letter to President Clinton outlining this proposal, as well as a draft copy of an op-ed piece we are developing. I would appreciate it if you would look over the draft of our proposal and provide me with your thoughts on it. I would also appreciate your input should you have any ideas about how to meet this challenge that could be incorporated into our proposal.

Again, I look forward to your input on this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,


JOHN B. LARSON
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 17, 1999

The Honorable William J. Clinton
President of United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Re: Technological Marshall Plan for the 21st Century

We are writing to ask you for your support for an initiative that in both, a symbolic and practical sense, we call SEEDS. Simply stated, SEEDS is a proposal that calls for the planning and development of a Strategic, Education, Economic, and Defense System for the nation.

The future of our nation's preeminent global status is grounded in the implicit understanding that our national defense, economic prosperity and educational quality are inextricably linked to the nation's future. The lack of a skilled workforce, 600,000 high tech jobs unfilled, problems in military recruiting, and the retention of highly skilled members of the armed services are alarming signals that America needs a comprehensive plan and a national strategy to prepare us to face key challenges of the 21st century.

You and the Vice-President have made enormous strides in defining a vision, and drawing attention to these issues. However, we believe this is a problem whose scope and importance requires comprehensive action creating the equivalent of a technological Marshall plan. The focus of this plan would be the fundamental retooling of our public schools and libraries, providing them with 21st century technological infrastructure and the ability to integrate the use of voice, video and data into the classroom. In addition, it would focus on the training of new, and retraining of existing, teachers capable of turning out the skilled workforce and the recruits this nation will need to retain its pre-eminent global position.

The Department of Commerce's "Falling Through the Net" report clearly provides the evidence that the digital divide, the gap between those who have access to information and those who do not, grows further apart. While we have begun the work to address this issue, we all recognize that E-Commerce will not flourish without E-Learning and that the strategic defense of a nation cannot be sustained, with the most advance weapons systems, without the best-educated and digitally trained people to operate them.

It is our hope, therefore, that you will direct an executive-level task-force comprised of members from the Departments of Education, Commerce, and Defense, and such agencies as you deem appropriate, and charge them with the mission of developing the strategic policies and identifying the funding necessary to create a national information highway that links our public schools and libraries. This task force, we anticipate, will provide the country with a national and a strategic assessment of all resources currently involved in this effort, and provide the coordination of governmental, private sector, and educational resources required to close the "digital divide."

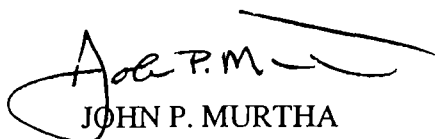
In addition, we plan to work with you and Members of Congress on a bi-partisan basis to seek legislation addressing tax incentives to corporations to work with school systems and teachers on training and mentoring; provide tax credits for teachers to purchase equipment and the training required to integrate, voice video and data into the classroom environment; and insure that our university schools' of education which receive federal grants be accountable for teacher technology training and retraining. Over the next ten years we will need two million new teachers. We must require that these educators be digitally fluent and able to incorporate technology into their daily lesson plans and curriculum.

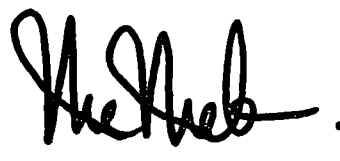
Further, we intend to offer legislation creating the position of Technology Advocate to execute, coordinate and monitor the progress of this comprehensive technological Marshall Plan. We believe that, this individual must be someone who understands the interrelated need for a strong defense, robust economy and an education system that leaves no one behind in a global digital economy.

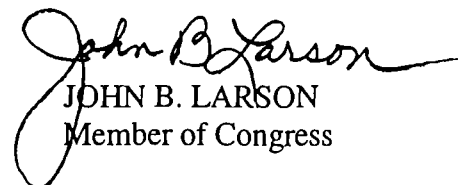
We are committed to reaching a comprehensive solution working with current federal agencies that will enhance your policies of the last seven years which have positioned America as the preeminent military, economic and cultural leader the world.

Mr. President, as we work with you in your final year in office, we believe that the concept of "planting" SEEDS is more than symbolism. We believe that it will perpetuate our strong economy, provide for the nation's defense, and educate all of our children. SEEDS is a fitting tribute to the field of new ideas you have championed and planted throughout your administration and whose future harvest will be part of your continued legacy.

Sincerely,


JOHN P. MURTHA
Member of Congress


IKE SKELTON
Member of Congress


JOHN B. LARSON
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DRAFT

A TECHNOLOGICAL MARSHALL PLAN FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

CONGRESSMAN JOHN P. MURTHA

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The problem is systemic. There simply is not the pipeline of academically sound, digitally fluent students graduating our public schools to fill the high tech jobs needed to keep our economy soaring and our armed services technologically proficient. Corporations have beseeched Congress to relax immigration quotas to meet skilled-workforce demands. Yet, this problem is further exacerbated by these same corporations raiding the well trained, highly skilled armed services workforce, depleting our military of the technically adept personnel needed to man the most advanced and sophisticated military in the history of the world. We must recognize that it is a problem if we lower immigration quotas instead of training our own workforce. It is a matter of national security if we import technological mercenaries to defend our nation. This simply will not do.

The Congress and the administration must act to address this national problem. The scope and importance of this action requires a comprehensive approach, one that is

the equivalent of a technological Marshall Plan. Just as Congress recognized the need for a national highway system to carry the nation's commerce, we must work with the administration to bring utilization of the information highway to our centers of learning. This fundamental infrastructure improvement must provide the tools needed to educate our students, propel the nation's commerce, and provide for our defense. We all recall what happened when we didn't retool the automobile industry. The stakes are far higher here. Congress must push for the nationwide retooling of our schools and libraries to close this technological void or watch the preeminent position we hold today slip away.

As New York Stock Exchange President Richard Grasso has most appropriately stated America's number-one obstacle to continued prosperity is complacency. This is a time unlike any other in our history. Call it a paradigm shift or economic revolution, but our high-tech economy requires Congressional action, not complacency. Too often in Congressional debates, strong advocates for national defense, the nation's commerce and its educational system are pitted against one another in the struggle for limited resources. They, instead, need to join together, united on their interdependency. We cannot meet the demands of a digital economy or the nation's defense with inadequate infrastructure, untrained teachers, resistant universities and an indecisive government.

Wall Street analyst, Abby Joseph Cohen has indicated that the biggest threat to the American economy is a technologically inept workforce; the same is true for our national defense. Nations like India, Israel, and Costa Rica are further along in recognizing the need to create a pipeline of skilled workers in the information age, and most nations are capable of not only competing with us, but leapfrogging us with our own

technology. If the economic consequences are obvious, the military consequences are ominous.

For these reasons, we are proposing a series of solutions at the Executive and Congressional level to set us on the right course. We have called this initiative "SEEDS,"-the Strategic Educational, Economic and Defense System.

We seek both the support of the administration and the bipartisan support of our colleagues in Congress. Much work has already been started in various committees, and several worthy and well-intended proposals have been made. However, approaches to date have been piecemeal and incremental. This simply will not suffice. We need to encompass the good ideas in a coordinated, comprehensive, and "omnibus" manner. SEEDS is a national comprehensive call to action.

We are calling on the President to form a task force that directs the Department of Defense, Department of Commerce and the Department of Education with the mission of developing strategic policies and determining the funding required to meet this national infrastructure problem. This task force, we anticipate, will provide the country with a strategic assessment and inventory of all resources currently involved in this effort and provide the coordination of governmental, private sector, and academic resources required to close the Digital Divide.

In addition, Congress must act. It needs to pass legislation that will address tax incentives for corporations to work with school systems and teachers, provide tax credits for the purchase of equipment and for training required to integrate voice, video and data into their daily lesson plans. Further, it must insure that universities that receive grants

from the government be accountable for the technology training they will provide to the two million new teachers who will be needed over the next ten years.

We also look to create, a position of Technology Advocate, established within existing resources, to execute, coordinate and monitor the progress of government agencies, the private sector, and academia, as they develop this comprehensive technological plan. The individual in this position must be someone who understands the interrelated need for a strong defense, robust economy and an education system that leaves no one behind in a global digital economy.

We understand implicitly that there can be no high-tech without the high-touch of a caring adult. Technological advances in the classroom will not replace fundamental reading, writing and math instruction. They do, however, enhance it. These technological tools will allow teachers to individualize instruction, become more diagnostic and prescriptive in aiding our children, and create greater accountability and accessibility between student, parent, and teacher.

Congress at this moment has the opportunity to place our economic and educational growth, our military strength, and the interests of our children in the forefront of our national concern. If we don't, we will be remembered as a Congress that squandered an unprecedented opportunity to invest in its people and secure the nation's future.



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First District, Connecticut
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Washington, D.C. 20515
(202)225-2265
Fax: (202)225-1031

FAX TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET

To: Andrew Rothblum
From: John Larson
Date: _____
Pages: _____ (including cover)

Fax: 456-5581

DRAFT

Mr. President
John B. Larson
[REDACTED]

Mr. President, we are writing to ask your support for an initiative we call "S.E.E.D.S.". Simply stated, S.E.E.D.S. is a proposal that calls for the development of a national Strategic Educational, Economic, and Defense System.

It is our position and borne out by the facts that the defense of the nation, our economic security and education system are inextricably tied and linked.

You and the Vice-President have made enormous strides in this area, but we believe this is a problem of crisis-proportion that needs the equivalent of a technological Marshall Plan. The focus of the plan is a fundamental retooling of our public schools and libraries, providing them with 21st century technological infrastructure. The training of new and retraining of existing teachers capable of turning out the skilled workforce the nation will need.

Lack of a skilled workforce, problems in recruiting, and retaining highly skilled members of the armed services are alarming signals that need a comprehensive plan and national strategy. The Department of Commerce reports 600,000 high tech jobs going unfilled, and the gap between those who have access to information and those who do not grows further apart. Your New Market Initiatives are an outstanding start but E-Commerce will not flourish without E-Learning and the strategic defense of a nation cannot be sustained even with the most advanced weapons system without the best-educated and digitally trained people to operate them.

DRAFT

We eagerly await your reply and are prepared to work with the White House staff,
Department personnel, and our colleagues to accomplish this national undertaking.

Sincerely,



The United States is the preeminent military, economic and cultural leader of the world. This position of global leader occupied by our nation is a precarious perch and requires eternal vigilance.

The fate and future of the nation's current status is grounded in the implicit understanding that our national defense, economic security, and education are inextricably tied and linked.

Thirty thousand missions were flown over Kosovo without a casualty – the most sophisticated weapons, the most intelligently integrated armed services in the history of the world.

Yet recruitment problems abound. The Joint Chiefs ponder where the individuals will come from, who will man our nuclear subs, pilot the Joint Strike Fighter, or direct the Strategic Defense Initiative? Currently, many who have been trained in the high tech

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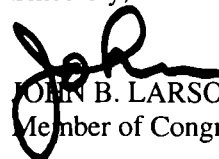
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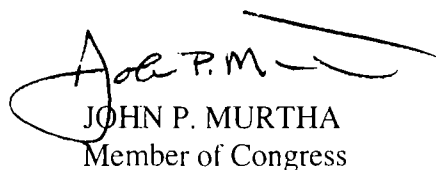
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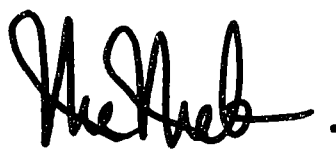
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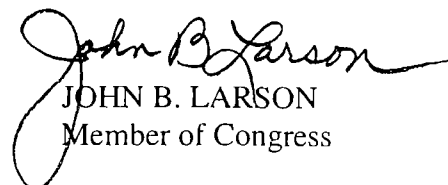
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CONGRESSMAN JOHN P. MURTHA

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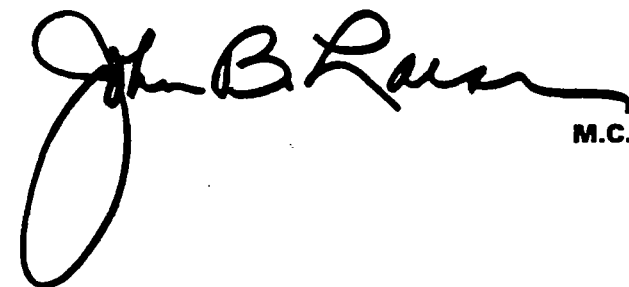
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0701

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Mr. Andrew Rotherham
Special Assistant to the President for
Domestic Policy
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500



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The fate and future of the nation's current status is grounded in the implicit understanding that our national defense, economic security, and education are inextricably tied and linked.

Thirty thousand missions were flown over Kosovo without a casualty – the most sophisticated weapons, the most intelligently integrated armed services in the history of the world.

Yet recruitment problems abound. The Joint Chiefs ponder where the individuals will come from, who will man our nuclear subs, pilot the Joint Strike Fighter, or direct the Strategic Defense Initiative? Currently, many who have been trained in the high tech 21st Century Armed Services are leaving for the more lucrative private sector. Even more alarming is the lack of digitally trained future recruits coming from our public school system.

The Department of Commerce in its July 1999 report entitled "Falling Through the Net" cited an alarming trend occurring along the digital divide. The report found a growing gap between those who have access to information and those who do not, and most disturbing found that the gap breaks down along the lines of race, gender, geography (rural, urban), and wealth.

There are currently more than 600,000 high tech jobs remaining unfilled in this economic boom.

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Corporate leaders have beseeched Congress to relax immigration quotas so they can import the skilled workforce that they need to continue the unprecedented economic growth. [Wall Street analyst _____ has indicated the biggest threat to the American economy is a technologically inept workforce; the same is true for our national defense. Nations like India, Ireland, Israel and Costa Rica are further along in creating a pipeline of skilled workers in the information age, and most nations are capable of not only catching and competing with us, but leapfrogging us, with our own technology. The economic circumstances are obvious, and perhaps some initial importing of workers may be necessary, but the prospect of the military having to rely on technological mercenaries from abroad to run the most advanced weapons system in military history is unthinkable.

The hard facts are that E-Commerce will not flourish without E-Learning and the strategic defense of a nation cannot be sustained even with the most advanced weapons system without the best educated and digitally trained people to operate them.

This is a national problem of crisis proportion if Congress and the Administration fail to act. It's a problem that will require Cabinet level cooperation and integration of skills and resources. It requires the Congressional will to address a true interstate infrastructure issues, the technological void in public schools and libraries. Congress needs to undertake the fundamental, national, technological retooling of our schools and libraries or watch our preeminent position slip away. The United States represents 4% of the world's population and controls more than 30% of the world's trade, every nation has us in their sights, or as New York Stock Exchange President Richard Grasso puts it America's number one problem to continued prosperity is complacency.

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This is a time unlike any other in our history. Call it a paradigm shift or economic revolution, but the high tech economy requires Congressional action not complacency. Too often, Congress has found its strong advocates for National Defense, the nation's Commerce and its Educational system are pitted against one another in the struggle for limited resources. They need to be enjoined in this debate together. We cannot meet the demands of a digital economy or the nation's defense with inadequate infrastructure, untrained teachers, resistant universities and an indecisive government.

This is a non-partisan issue that will require bi-partisan support. It starts with the assumption that the defense of the nation, its economic growth and its education system are inextricably tied and linked – and without the pipeline of digitally fluent, academically sound students, our preeminent world position is indeed precarious.

We are proposing a series of steps at the Cabinet level and Congressional level necessary to set us on the right course. We have called this initiative "S.E.E.D.S." (Strategic Educational Economic and Defense System).

We will be seeking both the support of the administration and the bi-partisan support of our colleagues in Congress to address this issue. Much work has already been done in various committees, and several worthy and well intended proposals have been made; however, to date, approaches have at best, been piecemeal, hodgepodge and incremental. This simply will not suffice. We need to come together.

We are calling on the President to form a Cabinet level task force between the Department of Defense, Department of Commerce, and the Department of Education with the mission of developing the strategic policies necessary and the funding required

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to meet this national infrastructure problem. In short we need a Technological Marshall Plan.

Just like our interstate highway system carries the nations' commerce, the national information highway will carry the information that will "light-up the desktops of students and the blackboards of our teachers", and provide the digital tools needed to educate our students, propel the nation's commerce and provide for our defense. As parents, we understand that no act of Congress ever reads to a child at night, tucks him in, or offers him the kind of nurturing growth that comes from caring parents. Similarly, no piece of technology can replace a highly trained teacher. There can be no high tech, without high touch of a caring adult. Computers in the class won't replace fundamental reading, writing and math, they will enhance them. Allowing teachers to individualize instruction, be more diagnostic and prescriptive in aiding our children, our future, but Congress must act.

Congress needs to pass legislation that will provide tax incentives for corporations to work with school systems and teachers. Teachers should receive tax credits for the purchase of equipment and training required to integrate voice, video and data in the classroom environment. Universities that receive grants from the government must make sure that they are training the future two million teachers we will need on how to integrate technology into their daily lesson plan and curriculum.

Congress working with the Administration should select a person of the caliber of Colin Powell to head a Technological Marshall Plan that integrates the needs for a strong defense, a robust economy, and an education system that leaves no one behind in a global, digital economy.

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Congress has the opportunity to place the interests of our children, our future economic and educational growth, our global competitiveness and military preparedness in the forefront of our national concern or we can be remembered as a Congress that squandered an unprecedented opportunity to secure the nation's future.

+ Focus on TEU

+ Possible EXE-ACTION