

August 5, 2002

The Honorable Dennis J. Hastert  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Richard A. Gephardt  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20515

Dear Speaker Hastert and Minority Leader Gephardt:

We the undersigned institutions, associations, and organizations write to ask that you support S. 487, the Technology, Education and Copyright Harmonization Act of 2001, also known as the TEACH Act. In particular, we seek your assistance in ensuring that the House passes this bill before the end of the session.

The TEACH Act updates the existing distance learning exception to the Copyright Act to accommodate the growth of *digital age* distance learning. Among other things, the TEACH Act will enable educational institutions to develop the full potential of online distance education, expand educational opportunity, and enrich educational content for traditional and nontraditional students alike. The bill does this by allowing the distance learning exception to apply to “anytime, anywhere” learning and by expanding the categories of work that can be used in online distance education. This change in the law will permit multi-media educational content to be delivered digitally to locations where students can use an Internet-accessible computer. The TEACH Act also incorporates safeguards to respond to the concerns of copyright owners about distribution of digital content, including limiting distribution of online course material to enrolled students only, and requiring the use of technological measures to reasonably prevent the unauthorized retention and redistribution of such material.

The TEACH Act has broad bipartisan support. It was initially drafted after the United States Copyright Office completed an extensive study in May 1999, concluding that current copyright exceptions are not adequate to support digital distance learning. The TEACH Act (introduced in 2001) has been the subject of serious negotiation, and has the full support of both the education and content communities. It also has strong support in Congress. The House Judiciary Committee reported it favorably, with no dissent, on July 17, 2002. It was also unanimously approved by the Senate.

We ask that you work to ensure that the TEACH Act is passed before the end of the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress. Because of the broad bipartisan support for this bill, we hope you will consider placing it on the suspension calendar as soon as possible.

We appreciate your assistance in this important matter.

Sincerely,

American Association of Community Colleges  
American Association of Law Libraries  
American Council on Education

American Library Association  
 Association of American Universities  
 Association of Research Libraries  
 BayNet Distance Education Network, Wisconsin  
 Nancy L. Case, Media Supervisor, Alachua Co. Schools, Florida  
 Chicago Association of Law Libraries  
 Classroom Connect  
 Educause  
 Brenda S. Gonzalez, Supervisor, Instructional Information Services, Columbus Public Schools, Columbus, Ohio  
 Kathleen Guevremont, Director of Elementary and Secondary Education, Monroe School District, Florida  
 Illinois Virtual Campus  
 International Society for Technology in Education  
 Virginia Moore Kruse, Wisconsin Intellectual Freedom Leadership Network  
 LakeNet Distanced Education Network, Wisconsin  
 Law Librarians Association of Wisconsin  
 Maine Township HS Dist. 207, Illinois  
 Mid-America Association of Law Libraries  
 Minnesota Association of Law Libraries  
 National Association of State Boards of Education  
 National Association of Independent Schools  
 National Education Association  
 Northern California Association of Law Libraries  
 Northeast Wisconsin Telecommunications Education Consortium (NEWTEC)  
 Northwest Missouri Educational Consortium  
 Peninsula Distance Education Network, Wisconsin (PenNet)  
 Pulaski Community School District, Pulaski, Wisconsin  
 Maureen Egan, Director, South Central Instructional Network Group, Portage, Wisconsin  
 South Florida Association of Law Libraries  
 Southeastern Association of the American Association of Law Libraries  
 Southern California Association of Law Libraries  
 Southern New England Law Librarians Association  
 The Consortium for School Networking  
 University Continuing Education Association  
 Virginia Association of Law Libraries  
 Dr. Roger Von Holzen, Director of Distance Learning, Northwest Missouri State University  
 Wisconsin Association of Distance Learning Networks (WADEN)  
 Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction