February 28, 2005

The Honorable Sherwood Boehlert
Chairman
House Science Committee
2320 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Boehlert:

Thank you for requesting our input on the High-Performance Computing Revitalization Act of 2005 (H.R. 28).

The High-Performance Computing Program (known as the Networking and Information Technology Research and Development Program) has played a critical role in creating and sustaining the high-end computing technology necessary to support the Nation's scientific and engineering enterprise. Six years have passed since the Congress truly addressed this issue. Given the incredible developments since and significant challenges faced by this field, H.R. 28 is both a timely and important reflection of the current environment and the policy framework needed to advance this field of science.

We wish to note the technical and policy aspects of this legislation. First, the overarching goals in Section 3 of the bill focus on the appropriate technical challenges this program must address. Second, the provisions that expand the research community's access and the recognition that high-end computing can be multidisciplinary and serve all fields of science are welcome additions. The demand for high-end systems and software by researchers in all fields represents a continuing challenge for this field. Third, new focus on software security reflects an important and growing technical challenge this field must consider. Fourth, we welcome additional oversight duties for the President's Information Technology Advisory Committee, particularly that its report will be presented to Congress. The committee represents an important source of technical and policy information on information technology for policymakers.

In conclusion, this legislation recognizes the role that the High-Performance Computing program should continue to play in developing the leading-edge technology and applications that drive our Nation's scientific and engineering enterprise. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to advance policies that support future innovations in computing.

USACM is the U.S. Public Policy Committee of the Association for Computing Machinery, which is the world's first educational and scientific computing society with just under 80,000 members worldwide. Our members include leading computer scientists, engineers and other professionals from industry, academia, and government. USACM's mission is to provide non-partisan scientific data, educational materials, and technical analysis to policymakers. Please contact the ACM's Office of Public Policy at (202) 659-9711 if we can provide input on any computing-related issue.

Sincerely,

Eugene H. Spafford, Ph.D
Chair
U.S. Public Policy Committee of the ACM
Association for Computing Machinery