

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations Endorses Geospatial Education Resolution

June 2, 2010 (GAITHERSBURG, MD) - The Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO) announced today that the Coalition recently endorsed a resolution urging the Obama Administration to take action to improve K-12 education in geography and geospatial skills. COGO endorsed a slightly modified version of a similar resolution proposed by the Association of American Geographers, a COGO founding member.

The primary reason for COGO's endorsement of this resolution now is that Congress is scheduled to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), commonly known as "No Child Left Behind," for the first time in almost a decade, but no mention is made in the reauthorization regarding geography education. The resolution endorsed by COGO is included below. COGO urges others to contact their Congressional delegations to support changes to the ESEA.

COGO Resolution Supporting K-12 Geography Education

WHEREAS, Congress is scheduled to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), commonly known as "No Child Left Behind," for the first time in almost a decade;

WHEREAS, geography is one of ten "core academic subjects" identified in the ESEA for which specific funding allocations and implementing programs are proposed to further its teaching at the K-12 level;

WHEREAS, geography education is central to preparing students to be informed citizens of the United States and economically competitive in a rapidly globalizing world;

WHEREAS, geotechnologies, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), GPS, photogrammetry, surveying, mapping, and remote sensing, have been identified by the U.S. Department of Labor as one of the three most important emerging and evolving fields, with job opportunities growing and diversifying rapidly, creating substantial workforce growth as these technologies prove their value in ever more areas;

WHEREAS, employers in all sectors, including private companies, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have indicated that there is a pressing need for more students graduating today with the geographic science and geospatial skills needed to support a rapidly growing field;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COALITION OF GEOSPATIAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Urges the Obama Administration to include geography and geospatial education in its Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and ESEA Blueprint for Reform proposals;

Urges Congress to include authorizations and appropriations for geography education consistent with other core academic subjects for K-12, as part of a reauthorized ESEA; and

Urges Congress to enhance geography teacher training by passing legislation such as the Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act (H.R. 1240/S. 749).

The Coalition of Geospatial Organizations (COGO) (www.urisa.org/cogo) is a coalition of 12 national professional societies, trade associations, and membership organizations in the geospatial field, representing more than 35,000 individual producers and users of geospatial data and technology. COGO has four advisory organizations for which geospatial issues are of critical importance, but not the primary focus.

The purpose of COGO is to provide a forum for organizations concerned with national geospatial issues that will 1) improve communications among the member organizations (and others), 2) provide educational information on relevant issues for their respective memberships, 3) align and strengthen their respective policy agendas, and 4) facilitate development of strategies to address national issues.

The Member Organizations of COGO are:

- American Congress on Surveying and Mapping (ACSM)
- American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ASPRS)
- Association of American Geographers (AAG)
- Cartography and Geographic Information Society (CAGIS)
- Geospatial Information Technology Association (GITA)
- GIS Certification Institute (GISCI)
- International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO)
- Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors (MAPPS)
- National States Geographic Information Council (NSGIC)
- United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation (USGIF)
- University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (UCGIS)
- Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA)

The Advisory Organizations are:

- National Association of Counties (NACo)
- National Emergency Number Association (NENA)
- Western Governors Association (WGA)
- American Planning Association (APA)