

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 81

Supporting the designation of National Digital Literacy Day.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 26, 2013

Mr. MARKEY (for himself, Ms. MATSUI, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. HAHN, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. WELCH, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. WATT, and Mr. MCGOVERN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce

RESOLUTION

Supporting the designation of National Digital Literacy Day.

Whereas Congress has long recognized the need to close the digital divide for Americans of all ages;

Whereas the Telecommunications Act of 1996 spurred a significant increase in broadband access in the United States, with only 15 percent of Americans having broadband access deployed to their homes before enactment and 98 percent of Americans having access to either fixed or mobile broadband today;

Whereas this dedication to closing the digital divide has continued through the evolution of programs such as the universal service Schools and Libraries Program (commonly known as “E-rate”), which has provided funding of more than \$30 billion over the past 13 years and

helped ensure that almost every school and library across the United States has Internet access;

Whereas this dedication was further demonstrated through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which called for the creation of the National Broadband Plan;

Whereas the National Broadband Plan set a goal of having a 90-percent broadband adoption rate by 2020;

Whereas these and other programs have strived to create a more productive, creative, and efficient Nation, where affordable broadband Internet is available everywhere and everyone has the means and skills to use valuable broadband applications;

Whereas the United States has taken enormous strides during the last two decades in moving from analog to digital communications technologies and from limited access to near-universal access to mobile broadband, but more work remains to be done;

Whereas it is estimated that 100 million Americans have not adopted broadband Internet in the home and one in five adults have no digital literacy skills;

Whereas having no digital literacy skills means that a person does not possess the knowledge of how to operate a computer or use the Internet;

Whereas Americans who do not use the Internet are missing out on opportunities to further their education, to access innovative health care services, and to find and qualify for a job;

Whereas more than 80 percent of Fortune 500 companies now require online job applications;

Whereas the impact is particularly great in urban, low-income, minority, and rural areas, and less than one-third of the poorest Americans have adopted broadband;

Whereas there is growing evidence of a “skills mismatch”, which leaves unfilled many jobs that require basic digital skills, such as knowing how to use a computer, perform an electronic search, and upload or process a transaction;

Whereas without increased training in these skills, this problem is likely to worsen in the future, with nearly 80 percent of jobs in the next decade projected to require digital skills;

Whereas the digital divide keeps teachers from assigning Internet-based homework if a significant percentage of their students do not have broadband access at home, and teaching to the lowest digital denominator does not work for our children or our country;

Whereas digital literacy is essential for education and preparing our children for the economy of the future, but when roughly one-third of American children do not use the Internet at home, all children are impacted;

Whereas National Digital Literacy Day is a purely volunteer event during which Americans can focus on increasing awareness of what the Internet has to offer by helping others overcome their concerns and fears about getting online through emphasizing how the Internet is personally relevant to their lives;

Whereas leaders in the public and private sectors have worked together and should continue to collaborate and partner to bring the benefits of the Internet to Americans of all ages; and

Whereas March 21 would be an appropriate day to designate
as National Digital Literacy Day: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports the designation of National Digital
3 Literacy Day; and

4 (2) reaffirms the continued need to promote
5 digital literacy, broadband access, and broadband
6 adoption in the United States.

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