

What People Are Saying About the Digital Learning Equity Act of 2015

“Through my work on this issue at the FCC, it’s become clear to me that the Homework Gap is the cruelest part of the digital divide. Today, students without broadband at home are unable to complete many basic school assignments. They fall behind in the classroom – and we all lose out when we have a generation ill-prepared to enter the digital economy. Kudos to Senator King and Senator Capito for the Digital Learning Equity Act, which puts the spotlight on the Homework Gap and ways to bridge it.”

- Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission

“Common Sense Kids Action applauds Senators King and Capito for pinpointing a critical gap that divides American kids into the digital haves and the digital have-nots – the lack of high-speed Internet in millions of homes with school-aged children. We support their Digital Learning Equity Act as an important step toward ensuring all children and their parents can obtain the significant and well-documented economic, educational, and healthcare benefits that come from having high-speed Internet access at home. Eliminating the Homework Gap is important for our kids and good for our country.”

- Jim Steyer, CEO and Founder, Common Sense Media/Kids Action

“The Maine State Library fully supports and understands firsthand how the Digital Learning Equity Act of 2015 can make a real difference. The Maine State Library is already working closely with the Cherryfield Public Library and schools in Washington County, Maine to provide underserved student populations and students in rural and remote geographic areas access to wireless Internet hotspots called ‘MiFi devices.’ With these devices– students can literally ‘check-out’ the Internet just as they may ‘check-out’ other library materials, and in doing so are able to extend their learning experience beyond the classroom – and most importantly – beyond the typical school day.

“The Digital Learning Equity Act inspires the types of partnerships, collaborations, and innovations required to bridge the digital learning gap – this Act can only bring about meaningful and positive change.”

- James Ritter, Maine State Librarian

“ISTE supports the King-Capito bill to close the homework gap. The Digital Learning Equity Act of 2015 represents the next critical step to ensuring that all students — no matter who they are or where they live — can continue to learn after the bell rings because they will have home online access. This will allow them to complete homework, take online classes, research and apply for college and communicate with their peers and teachers. ISTE was instrumental in leading a national coalition that worked with the Federal Communications Commission to modernize the E-Rate program, which will provide all of our classrooms with funding for adequate Wi-Fi within five years. We now stand ready to help Sens. King and Capito ensure that students enjoy the same online access at home as they do in school.”

- Brian C. Lewis, Chief Executive Officer, International Society for Technology in Education

“Students who do not have access to homework and resources from home are at a major learning disadvantage from those that do. This legislation helps to level the playing field by prompting highly creative and innovative ways to provide home access to disadvantaged students. Rigorous evaluation will assure that the pilots become national models for solving this aspect of the digital divide.”

- Lan Neugent, Interim Executive Director, State Educational Technology Directors Association

“The International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL) supports the Digital Learning Equity Act and applauds Senators King and Capito for introducing legislation that promotes innovative ways to address the lack of high-speed internet access for all students. The digital divide produces inequities and opportunity gaps for students, especially those from low-income backgrounds. To fully realize the potential of anytime, anywhere learning through next generation learning models, all students need reliable, high-speed internet access—inside and outside of the classroom.”

- Susan Patrick, President and CEO, iNACOL

“Librarians know first-hand that access to broadband and the skills to put it to work are essential for educational opportunity and achievement today. The Digital Learning Equity Act addresses these issues head on for everyone concerned with ensuring our young people have the necessary skills to go on to college and into the workforce. ALA applauds Senators King and Capito in their effort to promote innovative paths to close the digital divide for our nation’s young people.”

- Courtney Young, President, American Library Association

“Each and every day it is more evident that wireless plays a key role in new educational opportunities. As the Pew Research Center has noted, ‘the wireless-only lifestyle is especially predominant among the poor and young.’ Ensuring consumers can connect to mobile broadband services is especially important in rural areas where the closest schools and libraries may be a far drive away.”

- Steven K. Berry, President and CEO, Competitive Carriers Association

Organizations that have endorsed the Digital Learning Equity Act include:

Alliance for Excellent Education
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
American Library Association (ALA)
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Common Sense Media
Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)
Competitive Carriers Association (CCA)
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
CTIA – The Wireless Association
Education Superhighway
Engine
International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL)
International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)
National Education Association (NEA)
National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition
National Rural Education Association
State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA)
The School Superintendents Association (AASA)
U.S. Cellular