





## Public Policy Issues 112th Congress, 1st Session (2011)

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During the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session (2011), IEEE-USA will focus on the following priority issues.

 **INNOVATION & COMPETITIVENESS** - IEEE-USA will support the implementation of innovation-related legislation and the associated R&D budget appropriations needed to sustain U.S. technological leadership; promote economic competitiveness; and create high-value, advanced research and engineering jobs in the U.S. Priorities include:

- Strengthening K-12 math and science education, and undergraduate and graduate engineering education.
- Advocating sound U.S. defense R&D, aeronautics and astronautics technology policies.
- Maintaining federal investments in engineering research and development, including university research and education initiatives.
- Enacting a permanent extension of the Federal R&D tax credit that is competitive with those of other nations, but restricted to R&D in the U.S.
- Reducing the adverse impact on U.S. scientific leadership and technological competitiveness by the off-shoring of public and private sector research and development.
- Repealing the tax benefits for industries who offshore science and technology jobs.
- Rewarding and encouraging academia to protect intellectual property supported by both the public sector and private industry.

 **ENERGY** – IEEE-USA will support proactive energy policies that result in the development of new energy sources and the reduction of U.S. dependence on oil in an economically and environmentally sound way. Priorities include:

- Promoting increased efficiency in the conversion, delivery and use of energy, which is necessary to help meet the challenges of prosperity, security and the environment.
- Radically transforming the transportation sector to shift our energy use from imported oil to domestic energy production by focusing first on electric vehicle technologies, and then replacing the remaining transportation fuels by making use of alternative fuels.
- Responding to the threat of climate change through the greening of future of electric power supply by expanding the use of renewable electric generation, expanding nuclear generation and capturing carbon emissions from fossil power plants.

- Building a stronger and smarter electrical energy infrastructure by transforming the network into a smart grid, expanding the transmission system as needed to maintain reliability and capture economic benefits and by developing large-scale electricity storage systems.



**INTERNET, COMMUNICATIONS and OTHER NETWORKS** - IEEE-USA will support public policy initiatives to provide nationwide and ubiquitous access to affordable high-speed broadband data services and to facilitate use of new and demanding Internet applications. Such access will stimulate innovation, spur economic activity, increase national security and contribute to increased productivity for the nation. Priorities include:

- Universal and affordable access to high-speed broadband networks.
- Fostering competition in facilities, services, and content.
- Creating understandable metrics for network consumers.
- Fostering innovation, new applications, and new uses of the Internet.
- Promoting education, regulation, and legislation fostering network and system security for users, enterprises, and national infrastructure.



**IMMIGRATION** – IEEE-USA will support public policies to ensure greater equity in the recruitment, utilization and compensation of US and foreign-born high tech workers. Priorities include:

- Increasing the availability of permanent, employment-based (EB) visas and streamline the immigrant admissions process.
- Facilitating the transition of foreign students with advanced degrees in STEM fields to LPR (green card) status.
- Reforming the H-1B temporary work visa program.
- Expediting short-term visitor visa processing.



**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY** -The U.S. economy, job growth and competitiveness depends upon effective and well balanced protections for intellectual property. IEEE-USA will promote intellectual property reforms that maintain the careful balances established in our constitution and which are equitable and serve the entire cross-section of IEEE-USA membership, including fledgling companies (and solo inventors), university faculty, as well as Fortune 500 companies. Priorities include:

- Encouraging intellectual property laws and regulations that support entrepreneurial efforts; the engineering and development of inventions and innovations; and commercialization of those inventions.
- Clarifying software patentability.
- Considering alternatives to patent protection for fast moving technology.
- Encouraging U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) operations that enhance quality, organization and management of examination and grant functions to balance the rights of inventors and society.



**ENGINEERING WORKFORCE** – IEEE-USA will support public policy initiatives to foster continuing education and retraining of the engineering workforce; to improve the accessibility and affordability of high quality health insurance; and, to expand tax-favored opportunities to save for retirement. Priorities include:

- Proposing new incentives for continuing education to help engineers and other professionals maintain their skills and remain competitive.
- Supporting tax and other incentives to retrain engineers and other skilled high-tech workers who are displaced.
- Enacting legislation to enable business associations and professional societies to offer affordable health insurance plans for members and their families nationally.
- Supporting changes in the tax treatment of health insurance and employment-based health benefits.



**E-HEALTH** - IEEE-USA will support public policies designed to improve the quality, availability and affordability of healthcare through greater adoption of information technology, including the establishment of a National Health Information Network. Priorities include:

- Ensuring interoperability of electronic health information systems.
- Supporting community demonstration projects using Electronic Health Records.
- Improving the availability of credible information on health care alternatives, providers, and institutions through electronic media.
- Ensuring the privacy and security of personal health records to prevent abuses such as genetic discrimination and identity theft.



**CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION** –IEEE-USA will promote technology policies designed to reduce the vulnerability of critical U.S. infrastructures to terrorist attacks and Natural and other disasters. Priorities include:

- Ensuring the reliability and security of the electric power grid.
- Enhancing port and aviation security.
- Promoting cybersecurity and protection of the computer networks that control much of our civil infrastructures.

### **Other Issues of Concern**

In addition to these priorities, IEEE-USA will work with other Organizations and IEEE organizational units to support their government relations needs, and will seize opportunities to make contributions on other issues as they arise on subjects ranging from R&D, energy, communications, careers, Intellectual Property, and transportation.