



## **EdLiNC supports S. 241, legislation that would keep E-Rate payments flowing to schools and libraries.**

- Since its creation in 1996, the E-Rate has had overwhelming success in connecting our nation's public and private schools and classrooms as well as public libraries to the Internet. The program continues to be a vital source of assistance in maintaining connectivity and enhancing learning.
- Prior to the program's inception, only 3 percent of the nation's classrooms were connected to the Internet. Today, 93 percent of classrooms are connected. The Universal Service Administration Corporation (USAC), the entity that administers the E-Rate, estimates that 82 percent of public schools and 61 percent of public libraries receive E-Rate funds.
- Prior to the E-Rate, only 28% of public libraries provided public access terminals; now nearly all public libraries are able to do so.
- Despite the program's remarkable success, schools and libraries still have considerable technology gaps and a continuing need for E-Rate assistance. Each year, applications for E-Rate funds far exceed the amount available for disbursement.
- For the 2005 funding year alone, the Federal Communications Commission received 38,799 applications totaling \$3.65 billion in requests to help pay for telecommunications services and Internet services -- \$1.4 billion more than available funding.
- The E-Rate program has provided schools with \$14.65 billion since its creation and annually provides \$2.25 billion.
- In 2004, the Federal Communications Commission began subjecting the E-Rate program to accounting rules that effectively stopped the flow of funds to schools and libraries. At the end of 2004, Congress passed a one-year exemption from these rules for the E-Rate program, H.R. 5419: [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=108\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:h5419enr.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=108_cong_bills&docid=f:h5419enr.txt.pdf)
- Senators Snowe (R-ME) and Rockefeller (D-WV) have introduced legislation, S. 241 [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:s241is.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=109_cong_bills&docid=f:s241is.txt.pdf) , (co-sponsors now include Senator Stevens and Inouye [April 27, 2005  
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[bin/bdquery/z?d109:SN00241:@@P](#) ) that would create a permanent exemption for the E-Rate program in order to keep funds flowing.

- EdLiNC urges all Senators to cosponsor S. 241 and urges Representatives to sponsor companion legislation in the House.

## **About EdLiNC**

The Education and Libraries Networks Coalition (EdLiNC) was formed in 1995 to represent the viewpoint of public and private schools and libraries in the FCC proceeding dealing with the implementation of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The Coalition seeks to expand the use of educational technologies in schools and libraries by making sure that these entities receive affordable rates guaranteed to them in the Universal Service Provisions of the Telecommunications Act.

## **Members of the EdLiNC Coalition**

American Association of School Administrators  
American Federation of Teachers  
Association of Educational Service Agencies  
American Library Association  
Consortium for School Networking  
Council of Chief State School Officers  
Education Legislative Services  
International Society for Technology in Education  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Association of Independent Schools  
National Association of Secondary School Principals  
National Association of State Boards of Education  
National Catholic Educational Association  
National Education Association  
National Education Knowledge Industry Association  
National PTA  
National Rural Education Association  
National School Boards Association  
Organizations Concerned About Rural Education  
Rural School and Community Trust  
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops