



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 610

February Session, 2000

An Act Facilitating Electronic Commerce And The Development Of School Technology.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 12-412 of the general statutes, as amended by
2 sections 16 to 27, inclusive, of public act 99-173 and section 54 of public
3 act 99-241, is amended by adding subdivision (108) as follows:

4 (NEW) (108) Sales of equipment to a telecommunications company
5 or community antenna television company, as defined under section
6 16-1, that is used to provide telecommunications, high-speed data
7 transmission or broad-band Internet services which offer the capability
8 to transmit information at a rate that is not less than two hundred
9 kilobits per second in at least one direction.

10 Sec. 2. (NEW) (a) The Department of Information Technology shall
11 develop, with the advice and assistance of the State Board of
12 Education, the Board of Governors of Higher Education and the State
13 Library, a five-year plan for the implementation of the Connecticut
14 Education Network to provide state-of-the-art, high-speed, reliable
15 Internet access and video, voice and data transmissions that
16 electronically link all educational institutions in the state, including
17 public and independent institutions of higher education, the state's
18 libraries and all elementary, middle and secondary schools and other
19 institutions including businesses, job centers and community

20 organizations. The plan shall include the establishment of a
21 Connecticut Digital Library as a component of the Connecticut
22 Education Network to ensure on-line access by all students and
23 citizens to essential library and information resources. The Connecticut
24 Digital Library shall provide access to available on-line electronic full-
25 text databases, a state-wide electronic catalog and interlibrary loan
26 system and the electronic and physical delivery of library resources.
27 The Connecticut Digital Library shall include elements specifically
28 designed to meet the educational and research needs of the general
29 public, higher education students and faculty and elementary and
30 secondary school students and teachers.

31 (b) The department shall oversee the preparation and submission of
32 a state-wide application for Universal Service Funds to enhance
33 connectivity to the Connecticut Education Network, maximize
34 participation and grant attainment rates, and reduce overly
35 burdensome administrative requirements which discourage local
36 involvement. The department shall prepare a feasibility report which
37 sets forth (1) a review of how and under what circumstances other
38 states have successfully submitted state-wide applications to the
39 Universal Service Funds, (2) an analysis of what should specifically be
40 incorporated into this state's application, and (3) an outline of
41 necessary actions to be taken by the department for completion of a
42 state-wide Universal Service Funds application. The department shall
43 work, in consultation with the Departments of Education and Higher
44 Education on the feasibility report and state-wide application
45 submission.

46 Sec. 3. (NEW) (a) The Department of Information Technology, in
47 consultation with the Department of Education, shall administer a
48 program to assist local and regional school districts and regional
49 vocational-technical schools to become wired and connected to the
50 Internet. Such program may include grants and other forms of
51 assistance, including the provision of such wiring under a centralized
52 contract with the department. In order to be eligible for a grant, an
53 applicant shall present evidence that the applicant has applied for

54 funds through the federal Universal Services Fund.

55 (b) The Department of Information Technology shall transfer one
56 hundred thousand dollars of the amount appropriated for purposes of
57 this section to the Department of Education for the vocational-technical
58 schools for wiring and other technology initiatives at such schools.

59 Sec. 4. (NEW) The State Board of Education, after consultation with
60 the Department of Information Technology, shall develop technology
61 standards, including wiring standards, for school construction projects
62 under chapter 173 of the general statutes.

63 Sec. 5. Section 10-145d of the general statutes is amended by adding
64 subsection (e) as follows:

65 (NEW) (e) The State Board of Education shall adopt regulations, in
66 accordance with chapter 54, to provide standards for the certification
67 of computer science teachers. Such regulations shall make provision
68 for certification requirements to be met by either (1) completion of
69 prescribed courses of study, or (2) such other experience as the state
70 board shall deem appropriate. The regulations shall also contain
71 standards to certify individuals who hold a similar certificate issued by
72 another state.

73 Sec. 6. (NEW) The Department of Education shall establish, within
74 available appropriations, a competitive grant program to fund
75 innovative teacher training programs on the integration of technology
76 into the public school curriculum in order to improve student learning.
77 Regional educational service centers and institutions of higher
78 education, including Charter Oak State College, may submit grant
79 proposals for such programs to the department at such time and in
80 such manner as the Commissioner of Education prescribes.

81 Sec. 7. (NEW) (a) The Department of Education shall establish,
82 within available appropriations, a school technology grant program to
83 assist local and regional school districts to improve the use of
84 information technology in their schools. Grant funds may be used for

85 teacher professional development programs related to the integration
86 of technology into the curriculum and for computer support and
87 maintenance. Local and regional boards of education shall apply to the
88 Department of Education for grants at such time and in such manner
89 as the Commissioner of Education prescribes.

90 (b) The Department of Education may retain up to one per cent of
91 the amount appropriated for purposes of this section for coordination,
92 program evaluation and administration.

93 (c) No funds received pursuant to this section shall be used to
94 supplant federal, state or local funding to the local or regional board of
95 education for technology.

96 (d) Expenditure reports shall be filed with the Department of
97 Education as requested by the commissioner. School districts shall
98 refund (1) any unexpended amounts at the close of the program for
99 which the grant was awarded, and (2) any amounts not expended in
100 accordance with the approved grant application.

101 Sec. 8. (a) On or before January 1, 2001, the Department of
102 Education shall develop: (1) A state-wide standard for teacher
103 competency in the use of technology for instructional purposes, and (2)
104 a state-wide plan to assist teachers to achieve the standard. The
105 department shall assess the resources necessary to achieve such goal.
106 The plan shall be submitted to the General Assembly as part of the
107 report required pursuant to subsection (b) of this section.

108 (b) On or before January 1, 2001, the Commissioner of Education
109 shall report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to
110 the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having
111 cognizance of matters relating to education on the status of educational
112 technology in the public schools. The report shall include information
113 on the level of funding needed to assure that the technology needs in
114 the areas of infrastructure improvements, educator professional
115 development, curriculum development and student competency
116 development are met.

117 Sec. 9. (NEW) The State Board of Education shall adopt grade
118 kindergarten to grade eight, inclusive, computer technology
119 competency standards.

120 Sec. 10. (a) The sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars is
121 appropriated from the General Fund to The University of Connecticut
122 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2000. Such funds shall not lapse and
123 shall continue to be available for expenditure during the fiscal year
124 ending June 30, 2001, for the purchase of laptop computers for use by
125 students in the School of Education at the university.

126 (b) The sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars is appropriated
127 from the General Fund to the Connecticut State University system for
128 the fiscal year ending June 30, 2000. Such funds shall not lapse and
129 shall continue to be available for expenditure during the fiscal year
130 ending June 30, 2001, for the purchase of laptop computers for use by
131 students in teacher preparation programs at the state universities.

132 Sec. 11. (NEW) (a) There shall be allowed a credit for any taxpayer,
133 as defined in section 12-213 of the general statutes, against the sales or
134 use tax imposed by chapter 219 of the general statutes in an amount
135 equal to the amount of a qualified investment as defined in subsection
136 (b) of this section. Such credit may only be used against taxes
137 attributable to purchases of computer equipment to be used in this
138 state in electronic commerce. Credits allowed under this section may
139 be transferred among an affiliated group, as defined in section 12-218c
140 of the general statutes, which includes the taxpayer. Credits allowed
141 under this section may be taken as a deduction from income on a tax
142 return filed under chapter 208 of the general statutes or may be
143 refunded to the taxpayer after the filing of a claim for such refund in
144 accordance with procedures established by the Department of Revenue
145 Services. Credits allowed under this section that are not used against
146 sales or use tax liabilities in the income year in which such credits are
147 first allowable may be carried forward and used in any of the five
148 income years next succeeding provided the sum of all tax credits
149 allowed under this section shall not exceed two million dollars per

150 taxpayer.

151 (b) For purposes of this section, "qualified investment" means
152 resources including, but not limited to, cash, property, or services
153 provided by a taxpayer to a college or university in this state for the
154 design, planning, construction or renovation of buildings or
155 classrooms, the acquisition of computer equipment, or the acquisition
156 of other property or licenses necessary for operation of computer
157 programs which will be used in the instruction of students in business
158 studies related to electronic commerce or in work force development
159 programs.

160 Sec. 12. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.

FIN	Committee Vote:	Yea	47	Nay	0	JFS
APP	Committee Vote:	Yea	41	Nay	0	JF
ED	Committee Vote:	Yea	25	Nay	0	JF