

[~115H6407]



(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To allow the Administrator of the General Services Administration to transfer certain surplus computers and technology equipment to nonprofit computer refurbishers for repair and distribution, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. SPANBERGER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To allow the Administrator of the General Services Administration to transfer certain surplus computers and technology equipment to nonprofit computer refurbishers for repair and distribution, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Computers for Vet-
5 erans and Students Act of 2020” or the “COVS Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Access to computers and computer tech-
2 nology is indispensable for success in the 21st cen-
3 tury. Millions of Americans do not regularly use a
4 computer, and research shows that substantial dis-
5 parities remain in both internet use and the quality
6 of access with the digital divide concentrated among
7 older, less educated, less affluent populations, espe-
8 cially veterans, low-income students, and senior citi-
9 zens.

10 (2) In 1996, the President issued Executive
11 Order 12999 instructing the General Services Ad-
12 ministration (GSA) to allow schools and nonprofits
13 the ability to receive Federal surplus computers for
14 educational purposes.

15 (3) GSA created the Computers for Learning
16 Program, which distributes approximately 30,000
17 computers and computer-related equipment annually
18 to public schools and educational nonprofits for
19 reuse.

20 (4) In July 2017, the Inspector General for
21 GSA issued a report on the lack of controls with the
22 CFL website. The report noted multiple cases of
23 theft or fraud pertaining to lack of vetting of edu-
24 cation nonprofits registering on the website. Al-
25 though GSA indicated that other federal agencies

1 had responsibility to vet nonprofits for eligibility,
2 many agencies were not aware of this requirement.

3 (5) Since the IG report was issued, GSA has
4 implemented reforms to ensure that agencies are
5 aware of their responsibility to determine that edu-
6 cational nonprofits are certified tax-exempt
7 501(c)(3) organizations. However, there remains an
8 issue with schools obtaining surplus computers that
9 are not ready to use. In most cases, the schools do
10 not have the resources to pay to refurbish the com-
11 puters, which results in computers being wasted.

12 (6) Any Federal program that distributes re-
13 tired federal computers to a public school, an edu-
14 cational nonprofit organization, or a nonprofit com-
15 puter refurbisher for repair and distribution, would
16 benefit from a partnership with a nonprofit organi-
17 zation, whose mission includes bridging the digital
18 divide.

19 **SEC. 3. TRANSFER OF CERTAIN SURPLUS COMPUTERS AND**
20 **TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT TO NONPROFIT**
21 **COMPUTER REFURBISHERS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—

23 (1) FEDERAL AGENCY.—The head of each Fed-
24 eral agency may transfer any surplus computer or
25 technology equipment that is not being used by the

1 Federal agency, or has not been requested for use by
2 another Federal agency, and has not been used for
3 classified information (unless the relevant agency
4 head determines that appropriate steps were taken
5 to wipe the memory of such computer or technology
6 equipment)—

7 (A) directly to an eligible computer refurbisher for receipt in accordance with subsection
8 (b); or
9 (b); or

10 (B) to the Administrator of the General
11 Services Administration for further transfer in
12 accordance with paragraph (2).

13 (2) GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION.—
14 The Administrator shall transfer a computer received under paragraph (1) to a public school, an
15 educational nonprofit organization, or a nonprofit
16 computer refurbisher for repair and distribution in
17 accordance with subsection (b)(1).
18

19 (3) PARTNERSHIP.—The Administer may establish a partnership nonprofit computer refurbisher to
20 facilitate the identification of computer refurbisher
21 organizations and the distribution of computers to
22 such computer refurbishers.
23

24 (b) DUTIES OF NONPROFIT COMPUTER REFRUB-
25 BISHERS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—A computer refurbisher who
2 receives a computer under paragraph (1) or (2) shall
3 repair and distribute such computer to educational
4 institution, a veteran, an individual with a disability,
5 a low-income individual, a student, or a senior in
6 need.

7 (2) TRAINING PROGRAMS.—Each nonprofit
8 computer refurbisher to whom the Administrator of
9 the General Services Administration transfers a sur-
10 plus computer or technology equipment under sub-
11 section (a) shall offer training programs on the use
12 of computers and technology equipment for—

- 13 (A) educational institutions;
14 (B) veterans;
15 (C) individuals with disabilities;
16 (D) low-income individuals;
17 (E) students; and
18 (F) seniors.

19 (3) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the Sense of
20 Congress that each nonprofit computer refurbisher
21 to whom the Administrator of the General Services
22 Administration transfers a surplus computer or tech-
23 nology equipment under subsection (a) should dis-
24 pose of any such computer or technology that cannot
25 be reused do to age or condition—

1 (A) in compliance with any Federal, State,
2 or local law relating to the disposition of any in-
3 formation technology assets that cannot be re-
4 used or refurbished due to condition or age; and

5 (B) in ways that can still be leveraged to
6 fulfill their missions to bridge the digital divide.

7 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

8 (1) DIGITAL DIVIDE.—The gap between those
9 who have an internet-connected computer and the
10 skills to use it, and those who do not. Principle bar-
11 riers to closing this gap include access to devices, af-
12 fordability, digital literacy, and access to broadband.

13 (2) EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.—The term
14 “educational institution” means—

15 (A) any public or private child care center,
16 preschool, elementary school, secondary school,
17 accredited institution of vocational or profes-
18 sional education, or institution of higher edu-
19 cation; and

20 (B) in the case of an accredited institution
21 of vocational or professional education or an in-
22 stitution of higher education composed of more
23 than one school, college, or department that is
24 administratively a separate unit, each such
25 school, college, or department.

1 (3) EDUCATIONAL NONPROFIT.—The term
2 “educational nonprofit” means a nonprofit organiza-
3 tion that as a training component whereby the non-
4 profit organization trains the end user of the com-
5 puter equipment how to use such equipment and
6 that—

7 (A) with a mission related to education; or

8 (B) serves veterans, individuals with dis-
9 abilities, low-income individuals, or seniors.

10 (4) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
11 term “institution of higher education” has the
12 meaning given such term in section 101 of the High-
13 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

14 (5) NONPROFIT COMPUTER REFURBISHER.—
15 The term “nonprofit computer refurbisher” means a
16 nonprofit organization—

17 (A) that primarily works to improve access
18 to information and communication technology
19 in order to Bridge the Digital Divide;

20 (B) that is exempt from taxation under
21 section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
22 of 1986.

23 (6) SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The term “sec-
24 ondary school” has the meaning given such term in

1 section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
2 cation Act of 1965.

3 (7) SENIOR.—The term “senior” means any in-
4 dividual who is 65 years of age or older.

5 (8) STUDENT.—The term “student” means any
6 individual enrolled in an educational institution, ex-
7 cluding a public or private child care center.

8 (9) TECHNOLOGY EQUIPMENT.—The term
9 “technology equipment” means physical assets re-
10 lated to computers and information technology, in-
11 cluding peripheral components, tablets, communica-
12 tion devices (such as routers, servers, and cell
13 phones), printers, scanners, uninterruptible power
14 sources, and cables and connections.

15 (10) VETERAN.—The term “veteran” has the
16 meaning given such term in section 101 of title 38,
17 United States Code.

18 (d) REPORTING.—Not later than 1 year after the
19 date of enactment of this Act, and every three years there-
20 after, the Administrator shall submit to Congress a report
21 on the efforts of the Administrator and the head of each
22 Federal agency under this Act. Such report shall in-
23 clude—

24 (1) the number of federal computers retired in
25 that time period;

1 (2) the number of those retired computers that
2 were used in this program (and the uses of retired
3 computers that were not included in this program);

4 (3) the distribution split of those retired federal
5 computers to public schools, educational non-profit
6 organizations, and a nonprofit computer refurbisher
7 for repair and distribution; and

8 (4) the number of computers sent to computer
9 refurbishers and the number of computers that were
10 donated under this section