ACM and Public Policy

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Overview

- Guiding Principles
- Organization and Process
- Policy Agenda
Guiding Principles

- Education-based outreach to policy makers
- Comments should focus on the technical aspects of legislation, reflecting ACM’s expertise
- Coverage of policy in all three branches of government and some states
Organization

- Early 90s -- ACM creates policy committee to focus on matters of US public policy (USACM)
- Mission -- Serve as the focal point for ACM’s interaction with U.S. government organizations, the computing community, and the U.S. public in all matters of U.S. public policy related to information technology.
- Job Migration Task Force
USACM

• Activities
  • Forum for debate and quick reaction to policy developments
  • Respond to inquiries from the Hill and Executive Branch
  • Develop policy principles and positions
  • Positions can be sent up to ACM-EC for debate and approval
USACM

- Membership:

- USACM-EC:
  - Eugene Spafford (USACM Chair)
  - Annie Antón, Ruchika Agrawal, Charles Brownstein, Dave Farber, Edward Felten, Andrew Grosso, Harry Hochheiser, Jeanna Matthews (SIG Representative), David Patterson (ACM President), Barbara Simons (ACM Past-President), Ollie Smoot, Emil Volcheck (SIG Representative), John White (ACM CEO)

- Broader Committee -- 58 members

- Supported by the Public Policy Office

- Coordinates Policy Activities with the Computing Research Association (CRA)
USACM

• Involvement
• Open to ACM Members
• Approval from the Chair of USACM and ACM President
• Varied interests, but encourage active participation particularly where member expertise lies
Policy Agenda

• Focus on four major themes:
  • Advancing the Discipline
  • Balance Between Innovation and Intellectual Property Protection
  • Protecting Privacy in Technology-Intensive Society
  • Secure and Reliable Computing Systems
Advancing The Discipline

• Information Technology Research and Development Funding
• IT community testimony before House Science Committee
• ACM President Dave Patterson & Ed Lazowska’s Columns
  • http://www.cra.org/govaffairs/blog/archives/000329.html
Trends in IT R&D

Advancing The Discipline

- Export Controls
- New restrictions on foreign nationals working in the US
- Comments filed by USACM and CRA
Innovation and IP Balance

• MGM vs. Grokster Supreme Court Case and “Induce” Legislation
• Digital Rights Management (DRM) Subcommittee -- Chair Ed Felten
Privacy

• Real ID Act
  • Creates national standards for state driver’s licenses, linked databases
  • Expressed ACM long-standing concerns about national identification cards, insecure linked databases
Privacy

• Privacy Subcommittee -- Chair Annie Antón
• Reviewing pending identity theft legislation
• Three serious bills -- comprehensive and complex
Security and Reliability

- ACM statement on voting machines
- Voter Registration Database Study -- due Fall 2005
  - Chaired by Paula Hawthorn and Barbara Simons
- President’s Information Technology Advisory Council (PITAC) report on cybersecurity
Resources

- Blogs
  - Tech policy focus -- [www.acm.org/usacm/weblog](http://www.acm.org/usacm/weblog)
  - Research focus -- [www.cra.org/weblog](http://www.cra.org/weblog)
- Monthly newsletter
- USACM annual report
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