

NEWS RELEASE



Minnesota House of Representatives

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DFL introduces legislation for funding computer science teacher training

SAINT PAUL, Minn. - House DFLers introduced legislation to fund teacher training for computer science in Minnesota schools. Currently, Minnesota ranks last in the nation for access to computer high school science courses, with stark disparities among high schools in urban areas.

[HF 759](#) is chief authored by Rep. Liz Lee (DFL – Saint Paul). In the Senate, the bill is being carried by Sen. Heather Gustafson (DFL – Vadnais Heights).

"We need to invest in our teachers now to prepare our students for a 21st century economy," said Rep. Lee. "The tech industry is constantly changing and growing, so how we teach computer science has to change and adjust too. This is why the investment in this bill is so important."

The bill establishes a \$4 million fund to train instructors who teach computer science. It also establishes an advisory council to help the Minnesota Department of Education develop a plan to implement computer science courses in schools across the state.

"An early and entertaining exposure to computer programming opens the door to the option of a well-paying career in information technology, especially for young women who might not otherwise consider careers in technology." said co-author Rep. Steve Elkins (DFL – Bloomington).

"As an IT consultant and small business owner, I know firsthand the growing importance of technology in our everyday lives," said co-author Rep. Kristin Bahner (DFL – Maple Grove). "It is critically important that our students have a curriculum that prepares them for the jobs of tomorrow."

"Computer Science has changed the way we live, work, and learn for years," said Vic Dreier, Chair of the Board for SciMathMN. Dreier is also a Director with Project Lead the Way. "To empower students to thrive in this new world, we have to give all students the skills and tools to connect their passions with the careers of tomorrow regardless of race, gender, or geography. To start this work, we have to support our educators and involve them in the planning and execution of a state plan to achieve this for our students and their future."

The bill has been referred to the Education Policy committee and is awaiting its first hearing.

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