

**Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
Written Testimony on SB 980****Code.org****March 6, 2024**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and esteemed members of the Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee:

Thank you for accepting written testimony from Code.org in support of requiring K-8 schools to offer computer science in SB 980. Code.org is a nonprofit dedicated to expanding access to computer science in K-12 education, especially for students historically underrepresented in the field.

Computer science is a foundational subject – just like English or math – necessary for today's students to be active, informed contributors to our increasingly technology-based society. And the past year's widespread adoption of generative artificial intelligence has underscored the importance of an understanding and knowledge of computer science for all students. By teaching students logical and abstract thinking, data analysis, creative problem solving, and collaboration, computer science educates students on leveraging technology to solve tomorrow's problems. We should ensure that school curriculum is aligned with the demands of the 21st century and require that all students learn computer science. [Multiple studies show](#) that students learning computer science [in primary school](#) perform better in reading, math, and science; score better on standardized AP exams [in secondary school](#); are [17% higher likelihood of enrolling in university](#); and [perform better at problem-solving](#) from primary school to university.

Elementary and middle school instruction in computer science is a vehicle for equity in the subject, and **foundational courses in K–8 schools help all students develop confidence in computer science, better preparing them for high school courses**. Students who are historically underrepresented in computer science and who experience the subject early are more likely to enroll in subsequent computer science courses and are more likely to stay in the field. This sense of belonging in computing is crucial to address early in a student's education.

The tech sector still grapples with issues of representation, and diverse enrollment in computer science classes lays the foundation for a computing ecosystem that more accurately reflects the needs and experiences of the whole population.

**We shouldn't leave to chance who has access to foundational subjects like computer science.**

Thank you for your consideration.

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