

Representative Hans Dunshee  
Washington State House  
PO BOX 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Representative Dunshee,

We are writing to express our collective support of the University of Washington's request for \$40 million in the FY 2015-17 state capital budget for the construction of a 130,000 square-foot Computer Science & Engineering building.

Our region's computer science community has fast become one of the leading areas for growth and innovation in the country. Home to the world's largest software company, online retailer, and online travel company, our stellar pool of talent is charting new territory in mobile technology, enterprise software, cloud computing, interactive media and cyber security. The University of Washington is a huge engine for this industry, home to one of the top ten programs in the nation.

The UW Computer Science & Engineering program (CSE) is among the top national suppliers of students to leading high-tech firms, countless regional tech firms, and startups in our state. In the course of their education, the majority of CSE undergraduates participate in co-ops or internships with these local companies. Because Washington State has such a vibrant computing industry, more than two-thirds of UW CSE graduates remain in state. The UW CSE program is engaged in a broad range of research and interdisciplinary initiatives that produce far-reaching educational and economic benefits to the university and region.

The UW Computer Science & Engineering program (CSE) is at capacity and cannot accommodate current programmatic needs, let alone the growth needed to meet the documented demands for CSE and STEM professionals. The significant rate of growth at every level (undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, teaching assistants, staff, postdocs, industry partners, etc.) is due to the success of UW CSE's cutting-edge instruction and research initiatives that produce highly skilled and desirable CSE graduates. In the past decade, undergraduate majors in CSE have increased by two-thirds, graduate majors increased 50%, and annual enrollment in CSE's introductory courses has more than doubled. Despite this significant growth in the size of CSE's program, in the last admissions cycle CSE was able to accommodate less than one-third of the undergraduate applicants due to capacity limitations.

CSE is largely housed in the Paul G. Allen Center for Computer Science & Engineering, which opened in 2003 and quickly became a national model for new computer science facilities. The Allen Center and its state-of-the-art laboratory space revolutionized the nature of CSE research and education; it had a dramatic impact on UW CSE's competitiveness, supporting UW CSE to become a national leader. The space in the Allen Center is full with the current activities. Growth, especially for undergraduate studies and degrees, is not possible with the current constraints on space. In June 2014, UW Seattle CSE program granted 315 degrees —the largest graduating class ever.

This LEED-silver project will deliver a 130,000 square foot building, creating new instructional spaces, undergraduate student spaces, research and educational labs, shops, offices and event spaces for UW CSE. The project will enable further expansion not only of CSE's educational programs, but also of CSE's interdisciplinary collaboration in data-driven discovery, K-12 education technologies, and activities aimed at applying computing to global challenges, such as energy, health, security and privacy, and education.

As representatives of companies and businesses that rely on a ready supply of high quality computer science graduates, we believe it is critical for the State to invest in this sector in a way that ensures its vibrancy and growth. Our vision is for Washington to continue to lead the way in technology and computer science, but we must keep pace with the vast demand. This investment from the State is an ideal way to showcase our exceptional local resources and work force as we compete globally in this market. With the state's investment, we understand the UW would generate more than the remaining half of the total project cost through other local sources and public-private partnerships.

Please help us make sure Washington state continues to maintain its place at the forefront of the computer science industry and sets a strong base for future growth by ensuring UW can continue to produce the graduates we need by including \$40M in the University of Washington's state capital budget toward the construction of a new Computer Science & Engineering building.

Sincerely,



Brad Smith  
Microsoft Corporation



David A. Zapolsky  
Amazon



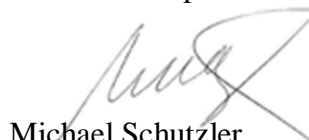
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Washington Roundtable



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Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce



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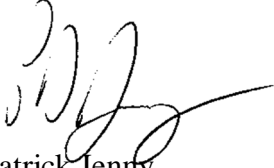
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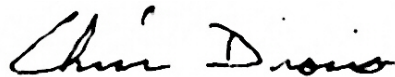
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