



The following resolution developed by the Association of American Geographers (AAG) proposes the advancement of geography education with three major recommendations. This resolution has been endorsed by governors, retired U.S. military leaders, more than twenty major national organizations and corporations, and dozens of state geographic alliances and smaller groups. It has also been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. We strongly urge adoption of the key goals of this resolution.

AAG Resolution Supporting K–12 Geography Education

WHEREAS, Congress is scheduled to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), commonly known as “No Child Left Behind,” for the first time in almost a decade;

WHEREAS, geography is one of ten “core academic subjects” identified in the ESEA for which specific funding allocations and implementing programs are proposed to further its teaching at the K-12 level;

WHEREAS, geography education is central to preparing students to be informed citizens of the United States and economically competitive in a rapidly globalizing world;

WHEREAS, geotechnologies, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), GPS, photogrammetry, surveying, mapping, and remote sensing, have been identified by the U.S. Department of Labor as one of the three most important emerging and evolving fields, with job opportunities growing and diversifying rapidly, creating substantial workforce growth as these technologies prove their value in ever more areas;

WHEREAS, employers in all sectors, including private companies, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have indicated that there is a pressing need for more students graduating today with the geographic science and geospatial skills needed to support a rapidly growing field;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS:

Urges the Obama Administration to include geography and geospatial education in its Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and ESEA Blueprint for Reform proposals;

Urges Congress to include authorizations and appropriations for geography education consistent with other core academic subjects for K-12, as part of a reauthorized ESEA; and

Urges Congress to enhance geography teacher training by passing legislation such as the Teaching Geography is Fundamental Act.

“During my time as Secretary of State, I witnessed firsthand how important it was that Americans understood geography and the world around them. Since then, as countries have become even more interconnected, that need has grown. As a result, I support the efforts by the AAG to promote geography education in our schools, and I encourage the White House and Congress to do the same.”

— James A. Baker III
61st U.S. Secretary of State

“Geography played a leading role in nearly every policy decision I was involved in as Secretary of State. Young Americans with an understanding of peoples, places, and cultures have a clear advantage in today’s rapidly-changing global economy and I am encouraged that the AAG is working with Congress and the Administration to build support for geography education at the K-12 level.”

—Madeleine Albright
64th U.S. Secretary of State

This resolution has been endorsed or adopted by:

The Honorable George P. Shultz: A distinguished academic and public official, Shultz served as Secretary of the U.S. Departments of State, the Treasury, and Labor.

The Honorable James A. Baker III: Baker's impressive career in government was highlighted by his time as the 61st U.S. Secretary of State. He also served as White House Chief of Staff to two presidents.

The Honorable Madeleine K. Albright: Albright's amazing career included distinction as the first woman to serve as U.S. Secretary of State. She was also U.S. Ambassador to the UN.

The Honorable Bill Richardson: Richardson's career in public service included time as Congressman, U.S. Ambassador to the UN, U.S. Secretary of Energy, and Governor of New Mexico.

The Honorable Timothy E. Wirth: Wirth represented the people of Colorado in Congress for 18 years, serving six House terms and one Senate term. He was also Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs during the Clinton Administration. Wirth has been President of the United Nations Foundation and Better World Fund since 1998.

Governor Pat Quinn, Illinois: Quinn took office in 2009 upon the departure of former Governor Rod Blagojevich. He was elected to a full term in 2010.

Governor Martin O'Malley, Maryland: O'Malley is currently in his second term as Governor of Maryland. He previously served as Mayor of Baltimore.

Governor Mark Dayton, Minnesota: Dayton is in his first term as the 40th Governor of Minnesota. He previously served as U.S. Senator.

Governor Mary Fallin, Oklahoma: Fallin is the 27th Governor of Oklahoma and the first woman to serve as the state's chief executive. She previously spent two terms as a Congresswoman.

Governor Haley Barbour, Mississippi: Barbour took office as the 63rd Governor of the Magnolia state in 2004. He served previously as a senior aide to President Reagan and as Chairman of the Republican National Committee.

Governor Sam Brownback, Kansas: Brownback is in his first term as Governor of Kansas. He previously served as U.S. Senator and as a Congressman.

Governor Gary Herbert, Utah: Herbert took office as the state's chief executive upon the departure of Governor Jon Huntsman in 2009. He won election in his own right in 2010.

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin, West Virginia: Tomblin has been the Mountain State's acting governor since 2010 and won a special election on October 4, 2011.

Governor Paul LePage, Maine: LePage was elected to his first term as the State of Maine's chief executive in 2010. He previously served as Mayor of Waterville.

Governor Lincoln Chafee, Rhode Island: Chafee took office in January 2011. He previously served in the U.S. Senate and is the only Independent currently serving as governor of a U.S. state.

Governor Peter Shumlin, Vermont: Shumlin is in his first term as governor. He previously served as President Pro Tempore of the state Senate.

Lt. Governor Phil Bryant, Mississippi: Bryant has been Mississippi's Lieutenant Governor since 2008. He served previously in the state House and is the 2011 GOP nominee for Governor.

General Charles F. Wald, USAF, Ret.: General Wald's 35-year Air Force career culminated in service as Deputy Commander of the U.S. European Command. A command pilot, General Wald had more than 3,600 flying hours in the Air Force, including more than 430 combat hours. He is currently Director at Deloitte LLP and served previously as Vice President for L-3 Communications.

Vice Admiral Robert Murrett, USN, Ret.: Vice Admiral Murrett is a former director of the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency. He also served as Director of Naval Intelligence and as Vice Director of Intelligence for the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

American Congress on Surveying and Mapping: ACSM members include over 5,000 surveyors, cartographers, geodesists, and related professionals.

American Geographical Society: AGS members include professional geographers and others who support the need for geography.

American Geological Institute: AGI is a federation of about 50 geoscientific and professional associations that represents more than 120,000 earth scientists.

American Meteorological Society: AMS promotes the development and dissemination of information and education on the atmospheric and related sciences.

American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing: ASPRS members are professionals in photogrammetry, remote sensing, GIS, and supporting technologies.

Association of American Geographers: The AAG is a scientific, research, and educational organization comprised of more than 10,000 members from colleges and universities, the private sector, NGOs, and federal, state, and local government agencies.

Cartography and Geographic Information Society: CaGIS members design, implement, and use cartography, GIS, and related technologies.

Coalition of Geospatial Organizations: COGO is a coalition of twelve national geographic technology organizations.

Esri, Inc.: Esri develops and provides GIS software and geodatabase management applications. It is estimated that about 70 percent of current GIS users utilize Esri products. The company has ten regional offices and 2,500 employees in the U.S. and its revenues are close to \$800 million annually.

Geographic Information Systems Certification Institute: GISCI has certified over 4,000 GIS Professionals.

Geospatial Information and Technology Association: GITA represents public and private utilities and telecom companies.

International Association of Assessing Officers: The IAAO's 8,000 members include government assessment officials.

Management Association for Private Photogrammetric Surveyors: MAPPS is a national association of firms in the surveying, spatial data, and GIS fields.

National Council for Geographic Education: NCGE represents teachers and state officials committed to enhancing the quality of geography teaching and learning at all levels.

National Council for Science and the Environment: NCSE works to improve the scientific basis for environmental decisionmaking.

National Geographic Society: One of the largest non-profit scientific and educational institutions in the world, NGS has been inspiring people to care about the planet since 1888.

National States Geographic Information Council: NSGIC members include senior GIS coordinators and managers from nearly every U.S. state and territory.

United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation: USGIF members in federal security agencies and the private sector use geospatial intelligence to protect the U.S.

U.S. Green Building Council: USGBC promotes sustainability in how buildings are designed, built, and operated. The Council developed the LEED green building rating systems.

University Consortium for Geographic Information Science: UCGIS represents 70 universities and other organizations involved in GIS research and education.

Urban and Regional Information Systems Association: URISA and its 7,000 members promote the effective management of urban and regional systems.

National Association of State Boards of Education: Founded in 1958, NASBE is a non-profit association that represents state and territorial boards of education.