THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
Washington, D.C. 20230

MAY 22 2003

The Honorable David Dreier
Chairman, Committee on Rules
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to communicate the Administration's support for an amendment that I am informed you and Representative Lofgren plan to offer to H.R. 1588, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004.

The amendment would repeal Subtitle B of title XII of, and section 3157 of, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (50 U.S.C. App. 2404 note). These provisions require that U.S. controls on exports of high performance computers be based upon a statutorily prescribed metric of computer performance – millions of theoretical operations per second ("MTOPS").

The President has long advocated elimination of this statutory requirement. Eliminating this requirement, as the proposed amendment would do, would provide the Executive Branch the flexibility needed to design export controls for high-performance computers that more effectively promote national security while keeping pace with rapid technological change.

I, like all members of the Bush Administration, believe our national security is of paramount importance. Therefore, the Commerce Department would not, of course, repeal existing regulations on exports of high performance computers until appropriate regulations governing such exports were in place.

Sincerely,

Donald L. Evans