

## Why Hasn't President Obama Been Encouraged To Advocate A Special National Technology Plan: A National Institute of Software Standards?

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Is it known why President Obama and the United States Federal government has not yet made a founding investment for a National Institute for Software Standards, comparable to the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Standards and Technologies? The nation has already played an incredible role in the creation and advancement of computer science world-wide since the 1950's. For a field which has grown by leaps and bounds, from mechanical adding machines to vacuum tubes to transistors to integrated circuits and microprocessors to networks of computers, it is surprising neither the industry nor the nation has advocated a central repository of computer expertise. This is definitely not the case in other science and technology endeavors: witness the 60,000-plus-fold growth by annual budget of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the nation's medical research agency within the United States Department of Health and Human Services, now greater than \$30 Billion a year and 27 Institutes and Centers strong, which touches on virtually every facet of American health, from treatment programs to post-medical baccalaureate education and research (US Dept. HHS, NIH, 2011). National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the successor to the original National Bureau of Standards (NBS) founded in 1901, an agency of the United States Department of Commerce, is equally established with an annual budget of now approximately \$750 Million a year spent at several institutions which perform detailed studies of fundamental science impacting the most basic physical measurements and matter known (US Dept. Comm., 2011). Money does appear to be available for important federal institutions! From the standpoint of consumer markets dependent on profit-oriented computer software companies, a national agency for software standards might be super popular. A great many institutions stand to gain from the establishment of such a central software organization: education and business (finance, transportation, publishing, tourism) markets alone might carry a popular vote endorsement, not to mention special party interests such as health care and related technologies. Several key organizations are available in the United States to allow creation of such an institution, of which the most well known may be the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), an international non-profit organization headquartered in New York City, founded in 1963. ISO, the International Organization for Standards, headquartered in Switzerland and founded in 1947, is also known within the States. No doubt software experts would agree to a visible role for the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) as well, another non-profit important for programmers everywhere! AND definitely not least, a plethora of luminaries in the United States and from around the planet advocating open source software, are available, often for free! If our nation's political candidates hunger for popular causes with strong employment potential during the tough election year 2012, they may wish to advocate one our nation's best as-yet-unrealized technology proposals, the National Institute for Software Standards!

United States Department of Commerce (2011), website at [http://www.nist.gov/public\\_affairs/budget/index.cfm](http://www.nist.gov/public_affairs/budget/index.cfm), downloaded December 31, 2011.

United States Department of Health and Human Services (2011), website at <http://www.nih.gov/about/almanac/appropriations/part2.htm>, downloaded December 31, 2011, states U.S.

Appropriations in 1938 were \$464,000 in 1938 and \$30,859,788,000 in 2010, a non inflation-adjusted increase of more than 66,000-fold.