Priorities in COVID-19 Response & Recovery

The COVID-19 global pandemic presents one of the most complex challenges governments have faced in modern times. As we plan our continued response to the pandemic and begin to plan for recovery, the incoming Administration should seek to build more resilient and flexible economies capable of adapting to future crises. Although not every job may be performed remotely, given the importance of remote work to society's health and vitality during COVID-19 and to ensure the workforce is better prepared to deal with future crises, the incoming Administration should adopt the following policy priorities to enable the country to prepare for and implement increased remote working, resilient education systems, and other remote-based activities wherever possible.

Respond to the Pandemic in the Short Term

The COVID-19 pandemic has put enormous pressure on operations across sectors. Needs for responding to this crisis in the short term are many and diverse, but the incoming Administration should not lose sight of the importance of maintaining and expanding vital IT services that businesses, first responders, health care providers, and other stakeholders depend on to sustain their operations and for economies to reopen. The incoming Administration should prioritize the following measures to ensure continuity and mitigate public health and economic crises:

- ☑ Encourage and enable the use of software and cloud services for continued business and government operations.

- ☑ Maintain strong privacy and security practices, including by updating guidance for robust security practices among the remote workforce.

- ☑ Remove impediments, such as quotas and customs duties, to remote services.

Recover from the Pandemic in the Long Term

As we begin to plan for long-term recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the incoming Administration should seek to build more resilient and flexible economies capable of adapting to future crises. The incoming Administration should promote policies based on

the following principles to aid their communities in recovering from the pandemic, and to ensure government operations, businesses, and individuals are better prepared in the long term for future crises.

Invest in Universal, Affordable, Secure High-Speed Internet Access

An easily available, reliable, and secure internet connection is critical for maintaining economic activity under social distancing measures and for economic growth in the aftermath of the current crisis. To address current shortcomings, the incoming Administration should:

- ☑ Invest in broadband infrastructure deployment, particularly in rural areas, and increase broadband access across and within geographies and among income groups.

- ☑ Deploy and secure 5G networks, emphasizing the need for open standards and open-source-driven architectures, and investing in innovative software solutions, like open radio access network and virtualized radio access network, to cybersecurity and supply chain challenges.

Remove Barriers to Cross-Border Collaboration

Connectivity and cross-border data transfers have become essential for countries that wish to secure the benefits the global remote economy can bring in jobs, wages,

productivity, innovation, health, and education. To harness the benefits of the global remote economy, the incoming Administration should:

☑ Sustain cross-border data transfers to optimize workforce health, safety, and productivity.

☑ Promote cross-border connectivity to help keep economies and employers competitive.

☑ Maintain a secure, reliable, predictable IT supply chain; refrain from imposing unreasonable import or export restrictions on the products in the digitized remote economy; eliminate customs duties on IT equipment; permanently ban any customs duties on software, digital services, or other electronic transmissions; and avoid discriminatory taxation frameworks.

☑ Grow the size of the digital economy through policies that encourage open markets for economic outputs, including digital products.

Promote Responsible Migration to Cloud Services

Cloud services enable educators, businesses, and government agencies to access, process, and transmit data across diverse geographies and work environments at the push of a button, building in speed, scalability, flexibility, and mobility—which makes them essential for efficient remote work, schooling, and day-to-day organization functions. To lay a sound foundation for the future remote economy, the incoming Administration should:

☑ Lead by example in responsible cloud adoption through forward-leaning cloud migration policies, sending powerful signals to the business community about the benefits of cloud.

☑ Establish clear, accessible security guidance for cloud migration based on internationally recognized, consensus-based standards.

☑ Enforce clear, consistent privacy standards through federal privacy legislation that reflects companies' roles as either controllers or processors in handling consumer data.

☑ Support interoperability and portability, so that information may flow between systems.

Transform the Global Workforce

Job losses resulting from the economic hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic are extremely concerning. The digital economy offers new opportunities for displaced workers if they can receive appropriate training on skills necessary to perform jobs that are and will continue to be in high demand. To encourage remote work and prepare workers for the future of work, the incoming Administration should:

☑ Improve access to STEM education, including to underrepresented groups.

☑ Leverage emerging technologies, like machine learning and blockchain, for workforce development.

☑ Remove obstacles in education systems that prevent short, flexible pathways from classroom to work, such as apprenticeships and other earn-and-learn options.

☑ Support new approaches to workforce training, re-training, and upskilling, including public-private partnerships, and short-term and nontraditional training and education programs.

☑ Provide resources and training to help industries adopt technologies that facilitate remote work and collaboration, and make them more resilient to future disruption.

☑ Lead by example in developing and implementing remote work policies, including regularly reviewing remote work policies in need of updating.

The
Software
Alliance

BSA

ABOUT BSA

BSA | The Software Alliance is the leading advocate for the global software industry before governments and in the international marketplace. Its members are among the world's most innovative companies, creating software solutions that spark the economy and improve modern life.

With headquarters in Washington, DC, and operations in more than 30 countries, BSA pioneers compliance programs that promote legal software use and advocates for public policies that foster technology innovation and drive growth in the digital economy.