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Letter of Comment No: 1723
File Reference: 1102-100

From: Hurley, Courtney S [courtney.s.hurley@intel.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 22, 2004 6:30 PM
To: Director - FASB
Subject: File Reference No. 1102-100 - Stock Option Expensing

Dear FASB member,

Over the past couple months, it has come to my attention that FASB is heavily considering treating stock options as an expense. I am strongly opposed to the board taking action based on the points listed below.

By treating employee stock options as an accounting expense, it disregards three fundamental issues. First, employee options are not freely tradable. How do you value something that has no market? How do you put a price on something if it's not for sale? The answer is that you cannot. There is no accurate way to value these options without an open market.

Second, employee stock options are subject to lengthy vesting periods—typically four or five years. If the employee changes jobs before the options vest, they are forfeited.

Finally, employee stock options will be exercised only if the stock price rises above the strike price. How does one predict future stock prices with any degree of certainty? There are entire industries dedicated to such a practice, yet no one is able to predict with absolute certainty what a stock price will be over a given length of time.

This FASB exposure draft is sure to be greeted with relish by our competitors in Asia and beyond. Entrepreneurs in China, Singapore and India will not just continue to focus on software development or other low-tech industries. They will create global economic powerhouses there which will be listed on those stock markets. In its latest five-year economic plan, the Chinese government explicitly calls for broader use of stock options to attract and retain key talent in China.

It is ironic that a communist country, the People's Republic of China, is encouraging the wider use of stock options, while in the U.S. the FASB wishes to make option grants to employees much more difficult and expensive. This FASB proposal will harm the ability of Americans to innovate and drive our nation towards second tier status. This action seems like it harms the employees due to the actions of a few. Let's support incentive programs for US employees to keep motivation strong and the industry healthy! Let's not allow the US market become uncompetitive in the global environment because companies can not afford incentive programs!

Regards,