

ikon**Letter of Comment No: 1804**
File Reference: 1102-100**From:** Mallison, Dale H [dale.h.mallison@intel.com]**Sent:** Friday, April 23, 2004 5:18 PM**To:** Director - FASB**Subject:** File Reference No. 1102-100

Dear Sirs,

I've been an employee of Intel Corporation for more than 12 years and stock options are a key motivator for everyone that works here. They help retain the employee base, align us to common objectives and can potentially reward all employees for hard work and dedication. If Intel is forced to expense options, it will undoubtedly drive a change to the existing policy of granting options to every employee.

Furthermore, 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. The days of the 80's and 90's huge stock price gains and splits is pretty much history.

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.

Regards,

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