**WASHINGTON, DC** – **AeA** reports that in 2007, the high-tech industry continued growing, adding 91,400 net jobs for a total of 5.9 million in the U.S. This is on top of job gains of 139,000 in 2006 and 87,400 in 2005.

"While we are certainly pleased to report the technology industry added jobs nationally and across nearly every state, national tech growth slowed in 2007, making the story good but not great," said Christopher Hansen, president and CEO of AeA. "Tech jobs make critical contributions to the U.S. economy in terms of innovation, and pay extremely well; the average tech industry wage is 87% higher than the average private sector wage. While these are the types of jobs every state wants to attract, the labor market remains tight, with unemployment rates below 2% across many tech occupations."

An examination of the sectors reveals software services added 82,600 jobs last year, up for the fourth consecutive year. Engineering and tech services added 45,800 jobs, also up for the fourth year in a row, putting it at an all-time high, says AeA. On the downside, high-tech manufacturing lost 29,800 net jobs. Seven of nine tech manufacturing sectors lost jobs, while only the defense electronics and electromedical equipment sectors added jobs. The communications services sector continued to shed jobs, albeit at a slower pace, losing 7,200 compared to a loss of 16,900 in 2006, according to the association.

"AeA is concerned that future growth is being jeopardized unless the United States prepares itself for a vastly more competitive global marketplace," continued Hansen. "The tech industry and the country risk an impending slide in U.S. global competitiveness, caused by negligence on the part of our political leaders to adequately invest in scientific research, improve our education system, and allow the best and brightest from around the world to work in the United States."

"AeA was proud to have been instrumental in promoting legislation that became the America Competes Act, which overwhelmingly passed through Congress and was signed into law in August 2007," concluded Hansen. "This Act offers a number of creative solutions for reinvesting in research and education. But the bill only authorized these measures – no funding was provided for this legislation. We call on policymakers to fully fund the America Competes Act in 2008."

California led the nation, adding 21,400 net jobs. The next largest net gains in tech employment between 2005 and 2006 occurred in Texas (+13,700) and Virginia (+ 9,800). Rounding out the top five were New Jersey (+8,500) and New Mexico (+6,700), says AeA.

For the second straight year, Virginia led the nation in concentration of high-tech workers in 2006, with 91 high-tech workers per 1,000 private sector workers. Until 2005, Colorado had owned this distinction since 1998. Massachusetts ranked second in 2006, with 87 high-tech workers per 1,000 private sector workers. Colorado was third, with 83 tech workers per 1,000 private sector workers.