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TI ATTEMPTS TO LOCK OUT UNLICENSED 3RD PARTY SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

Dallas, May 18 /PRN/ -- Texas Instruments, in an announcement made today, reaffirmed its position regarding solid-state cartridge software for the TI 99/4A home computer. One purpose for the announcement, TI said, was to be certain that its position is understood by prospective software developers as well as anyone contemplating or presently manufacturing plug-in cartridges for home computers. TI is one of the leading manufacturers of computers designed specifically for entertainment, educational and personal financial management uses in the home. TI shipped its one millionth home computer in April of this year.

TI said that it plans to continue as a major publisher of solid state software (A) packages for its 99/4A home computer by stimulating, assisting and encouraging the creative talents of the best software authors -- both freelance and established vendors -- to prepare software for its home computers. TI offers a large installed base of machines, worldwide distribution through over 20,000 retail outlets, merchandising and competitive royalties, the company said.

TI explained that, periodically, it makes modifications in the design of its home computer products to reduce costs, to improve reliability and performance, or to safeguard its image as a manufacturer of quality products. At the present time, every plug-in software cartridge manufactured and distributed by TI for its 99/4A home computer contains a proprietary auto-incrementing memory. In the future, because of presently planned additions to its product line, TI noted that any cartridge without this Auto-incrementing memory may not be compatible with all TI home computers.

The company also said that it holds a number of patents covering proprietary features of its plug-in software cartridges for the home computers. Relevant patents include patent numbers 4,243,984; 4,286,320; 4,298,949; RE 30,671; 4,304,964; and DES 260,515. The U.S. patent and trademark office has also indicated that it will issue to TI a patent relating to allophone speech, TI said.

TI does not intend to license these patents to others for manufacturing plug-in cartridges for TI home computers and TI will enforce these patents against unauthorized use by outside parties, the company said. However, because of TI's role as a major software publisher, the company said it plans to discuss arrangements with any and all potential developers of home computer software, under which TI would manufacture and distribute plug-in software cartridges, with attractive compensation for the software developers.