

# SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING & MATHEMATICS (STEM) EDUCATION COALITION

Acoustical Society of America  
American Association of Physics Teachers  
American Chemical Society  
American Geological Institute  
American Institute of Aeronautics and  
Astronautics  
American Institute of Physics  
American Physical Society  
ASTRA, The Alliance for Science and  
Technology Research in America  
Center for Mathematics, Science and  
Technology, Illinois State University  
Council of State Science Supervisors  
Engineers Without Borders-USA  
Institute of Food Technologists  
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics  
National Science Teachers Association  
Optical Society of America  
SPIE-The International Society for Optical  
Engineering  
Triangle Coalition  
Waksman Foundation for Microbiology

November 16, 2005

The Honorable Arlen Specter  
Chairman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on  
Labor, Health and Human Services and Education

Dear Senator Specter:

The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition urges you to adopt the House mark for the Math and Science Partnership Program (\$190m) during conference negotiations on the Labor, HHS and Education Appropriations bill.

While we recognize that these are tight budgetary times and the challenges we face are great, a strong consensus is emerging among leaders that our nation's future competitiveness in the global marketplace is directly tied to the ability of our K-12 schools to prepare children in mathematics, science, and engineering.

In fact last month the National Academy of Sciences issued a report entitled "Rising Above the Gathering Storm," which recommended ten actions that federal policy makers could take to enhance the nation's science and technology enterprise so that the United States can successfully compete in the global community of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The number one action item on the panel's list of recommendations was to improve K-12 science and mathematics education.

Innovative programs like the Math and Science Partnership program need to be expanded to meet this challenge. The Partnership program provides state and local education officials with the flexibility to direct more resources at specific subject areas where the funds will have the greatest impact. Under the program, every state receives funds to support research-based reform initiatives targeted at addressing specific challenges like increasing teacher content knowledge in high-need areas or boosting student performance in math, science, and technology – two key goals of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition is composed of a diverse range of over 50 groups representing all sectors of the technological workforce – from knowledge workers, to educators and education researchers, to scientists, engineers, and technicians. Our coalition has been in existence prior to NCLB and has continually supported STEM related programs for teachers and students.

If our nation is going to keep up with our global competitors in the technological economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must step up our investment to provide our children with the critical skills they will require for success in an increasingly competitive world. Nothing less than our nation's future prosperity is at stake. We urge you to support the House mark for the Math and Science Partnership program at the U. S. Department of Education.

Please contact James Brown at 202.872.6229 or Jodi Peterson at 703.312.9214 if we can provide you with any additional information or assistance.