



Business Roundtable

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Dear Member of Congress:

This month as America's students go back to school, you and your Congressional colleagues will set priorities among the many issues confronting you before the session ends. On behalf of Business Roundtable's 160 chief executive officers, representing U.S. companies with over \$4.5 trillion in annual revenues and more than 10 million employees, I urge you to put the enactment of policies that boost U.S. competitiveness at the top of that list.

Harold McGraw III
The McGraw-Hill Companies
Chairman

Kenneth I. Chenault
American Express Company
Co-Chairman

Edward B. Rust, Jr.
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John J. Castellani
President

Larry D. Burton
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Supporting legislation that fosters innovation and develops the next generation of scientists and engineers is crucial to America's continued scientific and technological preeminence. As the enclosed message card shows, the United States is facing a critical talent gap in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), and is not keeping pace with foreign competition. Reversing these alarming trends requires leadership from both the private and public sectors.

The business community, led by Business Roundtable through the "Tapping America's Potential" (TAP) campaign, has been playing its part to make improved math and science capabilities a priority this year. Since July 2005 the coalition has been taking action to reach the goal of doubling the number of U.S. STEM graduates by 2015.

Now is the time for Congress to play its part and enact policies that:

- **Strengthen K-12 math and science education programs:** Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate, Math Now, Adjunct Teachers, and Math and Science Partnerships.
- **Expand undergraduate and graduate science and engineering programs:** "Tech Talent" (NSF STEP program), Noyce Scholarships, Early Career and Graduate Research Fellowships, Graduate Traineeships, Study of Services Science, and the Professional Science Masters Pilot.
- **Double funding for basic research in the physical sciences over ten years.**
- **Fix visa and green card programs for highly educated, foreign-born professionals:** SKIL Bill (S. 2691/H.R.5744).
- **Extend a strengthened R&D tax credit permanently.**

The enclosed materials provide further information on the competitiveness challenges facing the United States and the policy actions that are needed this year to move us in the right direction.

It is imperative that you build on this year's bipartisan accomplishments by passing legislation that will keep America on the cutting edge of science and technology well into the 21st century. The future success of our nation depends on your actions today.

Sincerely,

John J. Castellani