



Business Roundtable

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BY FACSIMILE (202.225.3059)

The Honorable Ralph Regula
U.S. House of Representatives
2306 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

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Chairman

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John J. Castellani
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Johanna I. Schneider
Executive Director
External Relations

Dear Representative Regula:

On behalf of Business Roundtable, I urge you and your colleagues to fully fund effective Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs at the Department of Education as part of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations Bills.

Roundtable members believe that maintaining U.S. scientific and technological leadership is essential to U.S. economic growth, national security and a productive future for our children. However, our nation is facing a critical talent gap in science, technology, engineering and math, and is not keeping pace with foreign competition. To reverse current trends, we need to increase both the quality and quantity of the U.S. talent pipeline. This is not only about producing more scientists and engineers; all students must have a strong foundation in math and science to succeed in the rapidly changing global economy.

We congratulate Members of Congress for bipartisan accomplishments earlier this year: creating financial incentives for Pell-eligible students to take rigorous core courses in high school and to pursue STEM majors in college, significant loan forgiveness for STEM majors who become math and science teachers, and the McMorris/Holt Amendment approved by the House to enable the use of funds to train Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate teachers.

Recognizing current fiscal constraints, at a minimum the United States also needs strategic STEM education investments starting in FY 2007 to:

- **Fully fund the education components in the President's American Competitiveness Initiative:**

MathNow (\$250M) to improve K-8 curricula and ensure middle school students are prepared to master algebra;

Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate incentives and teacher training (\$90M) to increase the number of high school students who pursue and succeed in rigorous math and science courses; and

Adjunct Teacher Corps (\$25M) to enable math and science professionals help address the shortage of teachers with knowledge in these fields.

- **Strengthen and fund the Department of Education's Math/Science Partnerships** at least at the current level (\$184M), with priority to partnerships that focus on proven strategies to develop/update current teachers' content knowledge in teaching mathematics and science.

These represent investments in teachers and students currently in our classrooms. In addition we urgently need to improve the future teacher corps. If possible this year, we encourage you to fund at least one additional initiative that is included in the National Academies' *Rising Above the Gathering Storm* report—competitive grants to colleges and universities for STEM degree programs with teacher certification.

Business Roundtable (www.businessroundtable.org) is an association of chief executive officers of leading U.S. companies with over \$4.5 trillion in annual revenues and more than 10 million employees. Roundtable companies give more than \$7 billion a year in combined charitable contributions, representing nearly 60 percent of total corporate giving. They are technology innovation leaders, with \$86 billion in annual research and development spending – nearly half of the total private R&D spending in the U.S.

We look forward to working with you to bolster U.S. competitiveness and urge you to include, at a minimum, the key investments in the Administration's American Competitiveness Initiative in FY 2007 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations Bills.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Susan Traiman at 202-496-3267.

Sincerely,



John J. Castellani