



Business Roundtable

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June 6, 2006

BY FACSIMILE (202.225.1891)

The Honorable Sherwood Boehlert
Chairman, House Science Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2320 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20525

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Johanna I. Schneider
Executive Director
External Relations

Dear Chairman Boehlert:

On behalf of Business Roundtable, I want to thank you for your tireless leadership to ensure that the United States invests in innovation and strengthens its competitive position in science and technology. A world-class workforce is critical to our future success. Especially important are the scientists and engineers who will develop the next generation of technologies, push the frontiers of new discoveries and make critical scientific breakthroughs.

The three bills introduced by your committee—H.R. 5358, “The Science and Mathematics Education for Competitiveness Act,” H.R. 5357, “The Research for Competitiveness Act,” and H.R. 5356, “The Early Career Research Act”—address key components needed to strengthen the U.S. talent pipeline from Kindergarten through graduate school. We are particularly pleased by the expansion of successful existing programs—the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program and the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Talent Expansion Program (STEP). Both of these programs were identified as important contributors to talent recruitment and retention in the “Tapping America’s Potential” report released last year by Business Roundtable and fourteen other national business groups. It will be critical for the programs in these bills to coordinate with the newly-created Academic Competitiveness Council at the U.S. Department of Education so that there is alignment between initiatives with similar purposes in different federal agencies.

As you and the bill sponsors know, maintaining U.S. scientific and technological leadership is essential to our national security, economic growth and high standard of living. Innovation has fueled America’s economic growth and the extraordinary productivity gains of the last several decades. Although our capabilities are strong today, we must make the strategic investments needed to keep pace with the rapidly improving capacity of our foreign competitors. The President’s American Competitiveness Initiative makes a compelling case for these high priority investments.

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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 build bipartisan support to bolster innovation and U.S. competitiveness.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Castellani". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "C".

John J. Castellani