

August 1, 2013

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Conyers
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Dave Camp
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Goodlatte, Kline, and Camp and Ranking Members Conyers, Miller, and Levin:

As the House proceeds with legislation to reform immigration laws and policies concerning access to foreign workers in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, our diverse group of organizations strongly urge you to include provisions specifically targeted at improving the education of American students in the critical STEM subjects.

Our nation's future depends in great measure on our ability to prepare American students to succeed in the best, high-paying jobs of the future, which are increasingly in STEM fields. It makes great sense to use a portion of the fees paid by employers seeking to hire foreign workers to support improvements in U.S. STEM education that will help prepare all students for the best jobs, improve American competitiveness, and reduce our dependence on foreign talent over time. We are pleased that the Senate's immigration reform bill included this concept and are committed to ensuring that this principle is implemented in any immigration reforms enacted by Congress this year.

The SKILLS Visa Act, authored by Rep. Darrell Issa, contained such a provision, which would provide funding to each state through the Department of Education to support specific improvements in STEM education. This provision (Title III, Subtitle A) would also ensure that emerging STEM subject areas, such as computer science, which are closely tied to workforce needs, are eligible for STEM-related funding. Unfortunately, these provisions of the SKILLS Visa Act were removed from the bill during the Judiciary Committee's June markup for procedural reasons.

We **strongly urge** the House to reinstate this provision as it proceeds with a package of immigration reforms.

As Congress advances immigration reform, we encourage you to support inclusion of a robust STEM education funding mechanism that integrates these ideas to direct employer-paid fees towards three objectives:

1. Building the capacity of every state to improve student achievement in STEM subjects, especially in the most high-need school districts.
2. Supporting innovation in STEM education through competitively awarded partnerships between K-12 schools, universities, non-profits, businesses, and informal education and community-based partners.
3. Broadening the diversity and capacity of the U.S. STEM education pipeline

Simply put, if we are to keep up with our global competitors, we had better step up our investments in STEM education. The immigration reform legislation pending before the House presents an opportunity to do exactly that.

Respectfully,

AEG

Alliance for Science and Technology Research in America

Altshuller Institute for TRIZ Studies

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Council of Engineering Companies

American Physical Society

American Society of Agronomy

American Statistical Association

Association of American Geographers

Association of Science-Technology Centers

BSA | The Software Alliance

Campaign for Environmental Literacy

Changing Expectations Corp

Code.org

Computer Science Teachers Association

Computing in the Core

Council on Undergraduate Research

Crop Science Society of America

DEBLAR & Associates

DuPont

Dycet Research Group

Education Development Center

Funatation Tekademy

Hands on Science Partnership

Houston Urban Network for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

IBM

In Reach

Independent Electrical Contractors, Inc
inSPIRE STEM USA
Intel
International Technology and Engineering Educators Association
Magnet Schools of America
Microsoft
Museum of Science, Boston
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity
National Center for Technological Literacy
National Council for Advanced Manufacturing
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Foreign Trade Council
National Girls Collaborative Project
National Science Teachers Association
National Society of Professional Engineers
NY Sun Works
Oracle
Pathways into Science
Rebuild Workforce Project
SACNAS
SAE INTERNATIONAL
Semiconductor Industry Association
Soil Science Society of America
South Carolina Coalition for Mathematics and Science
STEM Education Coalition
STEM For Kids
Sunshine Hope
Telecommunications Industry Association
Telecommunications Industry Association
The Information Technology Industry Council
TODOS: Mathematics for All
UCONN McNair Scholars Program
Universal Technical Institute
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University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR)