



Business-Higher Education Forum

March 23, 2007

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The Honorable Bart Gordon
Chairman, Committee on
Science and Technology
2320 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ralph M. Hall
Ranking Member, Committee on
Science and Technology
394 Ford House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Chairman Gordon and Ranking Member Hall:

On behalf of the Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF) and its 75 members from leading U.S. corporations, higher education institutions and foundations, I am writing to thank you for your leadership in introducing H.R. 362, the 10,000 Teachers, 10 Million Minds Science and Math Scholarship Act.

Maintaining our nation's competitiveness in the 21st century global economy is of great importance to BHEF members. We are a part of the 16-member "Tapping America's Potential" (TAP) coalition whose report calls for doubling the number of science, technology, mathematics and engineering (STEM) graduates by 2015. In 2005, BHEF launched our own major STEM initiative, entitled "Securing America's Leadership in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics." Through systemic efforts, in alliance with other corporate and academic groups, the initiative is working to identify promising strategies for expanding the educational pipeline that leads to STEM careers.

We are elated that this piece of legislation in particular addresses our nation's teacher shortage by expanding the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship program to first and second year undergraduate students and augmenting professional development opportunities offered through the National Science Foundation's Math and Science Partnership Program. A key focus of BHEF's STEM initiative is to enhance our nation's teacher workforce, given their foundational significance in preparing students for STEM careers. As BHEF noted in a 2005 report, the United States faces a critical shortage of highly qualified mathematics and science teachers that will require an additional 283,000 teachers in secondary school settings by 2015. This spring we will publish a paper recommending solutions to recruit, retain, and renew mathematics and science teachers.

Hon. Bart Gordon
Hon. Ralph M. Hall
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BHEF is pleased to support H.R. 362 and will work with other organizations to encourage Science and Technology Committee members to support the Bill, and House leadership to schedule floor time for this important measure. Federal and state governments, K-12 and postsecondary education, businesses, and other key stakeholders must continue to promote proposals that focus on maintaining America's overall competitiveness. Again, we thank you for your vision and leadership in advancing the importance of this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian K. Fitzgerald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "B".

Brian K. Fitzgerald
Executive Director