

April 5, 2005

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your outstanding leadership and unrelenting drive to strengthen the federal commitment to K-12 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education. As you consider priorities for 2006 appropriations, the undersigned companies and business organizations urge you to increase funding for the Math and Science Partnership (MSP) program at the U.S. Department of Education to \$400 million. We recommend that this funding level also include \$120 million for the secondary school mathematics initiative included in the President's budget proposal.

A \$400 million appropriation would increase support for the Department of Education state-based MSPs by \$100 million over current funding levels, and also focus an additional \$120 million on the urgent need to improve the math achievement of middle and high school students. Math increasingly is the stumbling block that prevents students from pursuing technical jobs and careers in science and engineering. A new study by the United Negro College Fund asked high school dropouts in the federal Job Corps program what had caused them to quit school. A majority of the Job Corps participants, most of whom were African American or Hispanic, gave the same answer: "Math."

The business community cannot emphasize enough how critical it is to ensure that American students—our future workforce—are proficient in mathematics and science. The recent international PISA test showed that U.S. 15 year-olds perform below average in mathematics problem-solving compared to other developed countries. The U.S. cannot afford to be complacent when our technological leadership and competitiveness in the worldwide economy is at stake.

The Department of Education's Math and Science Partnerships complement the NSF's Partnerships, which we also support. The two programs are not duplicative; they are one of the best examples of using the unique capacities of two government agencies to address different aspects of the same problem.

We realize that current funding constraints force Members of Congress to make difficult choices. However, as our competitors make increasing commitments to science, technology, engineering,

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and mathematics education, we encourage you to fund the 2006 Department of Education Math and Science Partnerships at \$400 million. We also are concerned about the elimination of the Enhancing Education Through Technology program in No Child Left Behind and ask you to restore appropriate resources to promote effective use of technology as a vital tool for improving productivity and closing achievement gaps.

We appreciate not only your past support, but also your leadership on this issue that is so important to our nation's future.

Sincerely,

Advanced Information Services, Inc.
AeA
Agilent Technologies
Akamai Technologies, Inc.
Amgen
ANDA Networks, Inc.
Apple
Applied Materials, Inc.
Authoria
Avici Systems Inc.
Borealis Ventures
Business Coalition for Educational Excellence (NJ)
Business Roundtable
Business Software Alliance
Centra Software
Charles River Ventures
Cisco Systems, Inc.
Computer Systems Policy Project (CSPP)
Da Vinci Discovery Center of Science and
Technology
Delaware Foundation for Science and Mathematics
Education
Delphi Corporation
eBay Inc.
EMC Corporation
Genentech, Inc.
Hewlett-Packard
IBM Corporation
Industrial Research Institute
Information Technology Association of America
Intel Corporation
Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network
JumpStart Partners, Inc.
Kodak
Madrona Venture Fund
Mass Insight Education and Research Institute (MA)

Massachusetts Business Roundtable
Microsoft Corporation
Minority Business Roundtable
Motorola
National Association of Manufacturers
National Venture Capital Association
New Mexico Business Roundtable for Educational
Excellence
Newport Corporation
Northern Virginia Technology Council
Oklahoma Business and Education Coalition
palmOne, Inc.
Perceptive Sciences Corporation
PGP Corporation
Pittsburgh Technology Council
Public School Forum of North Carolina
Rasky Baerlein Strategic Communications
SAS
Semiconductor Industry Association
Siemens Corporation
Sierra Atlantic, Inc.
SimpleTech, Inc.
Software & Information Industry Association
Start Up Partners
State Farm Insurance Companies
Sternhill Partners
Sun Microsystems, Inc.
Synopsis, Inc.
Texas Business and Education Coalition
Texas Instruments
The Alliance for Science & Technology Research
in America
The Business Council of New York State, Inc.
The Information Technology Industrial Council
The McGraw-Hill Companies
The Nasdaq Stock Market, Inc.

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The Public Education & Business Coalition (CO)

The Technology Network (TechNet)

The Vermont Business Roundtable

U.S. Chamber of Commerce

VeriSign, Inc.

Visionael Corporation

Western Digital Corporation

World Wide Packets

Xilinx

SkillSoft PLC

Zebra Imaging, Inc.