

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 9, 2007

Dear Colleague:

We write to invite you to join the *Diversity and Innovation Caucus*. The purpose of the caucus will be to:

- Generate policy ideas for increasing the participation of groups under-represented in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM);
- Articulate the importance of pro-STEM and pro-innovation policies for groups under-represented in STEM;
- Communicate the importance of promoting diversity in STEM for the achievement of America's innovation and competitiveness goals; and
- Work with Congressional Leadership and relevant committees to ensure that innovation and competitiveness policy is shaped in such a way that it takes advantage of the potential offered by minority communities and by women, groups that are both under-represented in the STEM fields.

We believe the increased education and participation of groups currently under-represented in STEM is essential to supplying the American economy with the expertise the country needs to innovate and remain competitive.

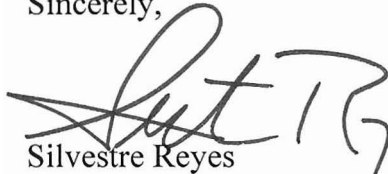





According to the U.S. Census, 39 percent of the population under the age of 18 is a racial or ethnic minority. That percentage is on a path to pass 50 percent by the year 2050. Yet, in 2000, only 4.4 percent of the science and engineering jobs were held by African Americans and only 3.4 percent by Hispanics. Women constitute over half of the post-secondary students in the nation, but represent a little more than one quarter of our science and engineering workforce.

By focusing greater percentages of our limited resources on currently under-represented groups, we can generate a larger pay off for our investment and better serve the needs of our economy by expanding the STEM pipeline. Simply, if we are to remain an innovative and economically competitive nation, the face of our high-tech workforce must reflect the true face of America.

If America is to achieve its strategic objectives in STEM, the enormous potential of groups that are currently under represented in those fields must be realized through expanded and focused educational opportunities. The benefits gained by supporting minority groups in the pursuit for excellence are benefits our entire nation will enjoy. Excellence is strongly linked to the prevalence of opportunity.

If you would like to join the Diversity and Innovation Caucus or have any questions, please contact Peter Ambler with Congressman Reyes at peter.ambler@mail.house.gov or 5-4831.

Sincerely,

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|  Silvestre Reyes Member of Congress |  Eddie Bernice Johnson Member of Congress |  Zoe Lofgren Member of Congress |
|  Rubén Hinojosa Member of Congress |  Mike Honda Member of Congress |  G.K. Butterfield Member of Congress |