

April 21, 2008

The Honorable Mike Honda
U.S. House of Representatives
1713 Longworth Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Honda:

The National Science Teachers Association, the American Chemical Society, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and the Knowledge Alliance thank you for your leadership in advocating for science, technology, engineering and mathematics education. Your bill, the Enhancing Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Education Act of 2008, will work to coordinate and enhance STEM education programs at the federal level and empower states to address the critical needs in their STEM education systems.

We support reorganization of the current Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to create a standing Committee on STEM Education with the responsibility to coordinate all Federal STEM education programs. This will bring visibility and credibility to STEM initiatives and work to ensure these Federal programs are an efficient use of federal funds. It is critical all federal agencies with STEM initiatives—especially the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation (NSF)—work to ensure that the best practices, exemplary models and programs that improve student achievement are shared and widely replicated.

We also support efforts to create an Office of STEM Education at the U.S. Department of Education and a new Assistant Secretary of Education position that would be responsible for coordinating the Department's efforts in STEM education and interacting with stakeholders outside the Department.

The State Consortium on STEM Education will encourage states to adopt a comprehensive approach on what all stakeholders need to do to ensure our students will succeed in the 21st century. It is critical that these groups work quickly to identify then implement reform strategies that will align teacher preparation, curriculum tools, support for beginning teachers and professional development with the knowledge and skills needed to improve student performance.

Our groups look forward to working with your office as this legislation moves forward. If we can be additional assistance please contact James Brown (ACS) at 202-872-6229; Jodi Peterson (NSTA) at 703-312-9214; Ken Krehbiel (NCTM) at 703-620-9840; or Kate Bannon (KA) at 202-518-0847.

Sincerely,

American Chemical Society
Knowledge Alliance
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Science Teachers Association