October 18, 2011

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Member, Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
U.S. Senate
107 Russell Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Merkley:

On behalf of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition, our organizations strongly support your efforts to craft the *Preparing Students for Success in the Global Economy Act of 2011 (S. 1675)* to improve how the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), otherwise known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), deals with the critical challenge of improving STEM education. We are proud to be a partner in your efforts.

As a broad alliance of business, professional, and education organizations, our Coalition works aggressively to raise awareness in Congress, the Administration, and other organizations about the critical role that STEM education plays in enabling the U.S. to remain the economic and technological leader of the global marketplace of the 21st century.

We are very pleased that your proposed legislation will encourage and inspire more of our best and brightest students – especially those from underrepresented or disadvantaged groups – to study in STEM fields, improve the content knowledge and professional skills of the STEM educator workforce, recruit and retain highly-skilled STEM educators, and improve the resources available for learning in STEM subjects.

It is important to note that your bill is fiscally responsible by seeking to amend and improve an existing Department of Education program – the Math and Science Partnerships (Title IIB of ESEA) – rather than creating a wholly new initiative. Further, we are also pleased that the bill strikes a balance between competitive and formula grant funding and encourages state flexibility by empowering states to involve a broad array of stakeholders in the formulation and articulation of their state's unique STEM needs. Finally, we strongly support the bill's focus on innovation through a variety of best practices such as STEM Master Teachers, hands-on engineering competitions, and innovative professional development models.

As you know, the future of our country's economic competitiveness depends greatly on our how our students are learning in STEM fields. According to a 2011 Commerce Department study, growth in STEM jobs over the past 10 years was *three times faster* than growth in non-STEM

jobs. In short, if we are to keep up with our global competitors, we had better step up our investments in STEM education. Please contact James Brown, Executive Director of the Coalition at (202) 223-1887 or jfbrown@stemedcoalition.org with questions, comments, or for further information.

Thank you for your leadership on this vitally important issue.

Respectfully,

Afterschool Alliance
American Chemical Society
American Society for Engineering Education
American Society of Agronomy
ASME
Campaign for Environmental Literacy
Committee for the Advancement of STEM Specialty Schools
Advocacy for STEM in ESL
American Geophysical Union
American Geosciences Institute
American Institute of Physics
American Statistical Association
Baltimore Washington Corridor Chamber
Biomedical Engineering Society
BSCS (Biological Sciences Curriculum Study)
Council of Presidential Awardees in Mathematics (CPAM)
Council of State Science Supervisors
ecoCAD Design Group
Educational Technologies Group, Inc.
Funutation Tekademy LLC
LearnOnLine, Inc
Haller Education Consulting
International Technology and Engineering Educators Association
ITEEA Council for Supervision and Leadership
Louisiana Science Teachers Association
Louisiana STEM Coalition
Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance
McGraw-Hill
Metea Valley High School Science Department
National Council for Advanced Manufacturing
National Council of Structural Engineers Association
National Defense Industrial Association
Crop Science Society of America
Education Development Center Inc. (EDC)
Hands on Science Partnership
Illinois Math and Science Academy
Microsoft Corporation
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
National Science Teachers Association
Soil Science Society of America
National Education Association
National Institute of Building Sciences
North Carolina Science Leadership Association
Oregon Science Teachers Association
Pico Turbine International
Society of Women Engineers
South Carolina's Coalition for Mathematics & Science
SparkFun Electronics
STEM Education Center, University of Minnesota
STEMfinity
Techno Chaos
Technology Student Association
The Association of Science Materials Centers, ASMC
The Cain Center for STEM Literacy
The Ohio Academy of Science
The Optical Society
The STEM Academy
UNC Charlotte Center for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education
Vernier Software & Technology
Wyoming Seminary College Preparatory School