

America's competitiveness in a global economy depends upon our ability to innovate. Yet today, our economy is shutting out millions of workers who could contribute valuable new ideas in science and technology: America's women.

According to the Census Bureau, women comprise almost half of the U.S. workforce, yet they hold only a quarter of the jobs in scientific and technological fields. This fact is particularly troubling because workers in science and technology tend to bring home good, middle-class salaries, earning on average 33 percent more than workers in other fields.

Why do so few women choose high-tech careers? One reason is that these jobs rarely offer the flexibility that parents need in order to raise a family. In fact, many women say that, in order to succeed in science, they must sacrifice their family goals. Nearly half of female scientists in a recent survey by Southern Methodist University said that they had fewer children than they would have liked due to their career pressures.

If America continues to exclude our women from high-tech jobs, then our nation's ability to innovate will suffer, and our economy will lag behind.

Recently, the National Science Foundation announced an effort to help more women succeed in science and technology. Among the new family-friendly policies, grant recipients can now defer their grants for up to a year due to a child birth or adoption. Recipients can even apply for supplemental funds to hire research technicians to help maintain labs while scientists are taking care of their growing families.

This initiative is a modest but important step toward welcoming more women into science and technology – and toward creating the high-paying, innovative jobs that will put our economy back on track.

NEW TINTON FALLS VA CLINIC WILL PROVIDE EXPANDED SERVICES TO MONMOUTH VETERANS

Earlier this week, I joined fellow U.S. Rep. Frank Pallone at a ribbon-cutting to recognize the reopening of the Department of Veterans Affairs Community-Based Outpatient Clinic in Monmouth County.

After the Army's misguided decision to close Fort Monmouth, I committed to working with the VA to ensure that local veterans will continue to have access to the medical care that they rely on and have earned. The new clinic marks a significant step toward fulfilling that commitment. The facility includes expanded clinical services, additional specialized support for veterans currently returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, expanded telehealth services, and greater social work services.

If you are a veteran who would like to seek care at the new facility, please call 732-842-4751 to schedule an appointment.

SUPPORTING FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Last year, Congress approved legislation that I introduced to provide \$5 million in annual funding for Farm to School programs. Farm to School programs bring locally or regionally grown fresh produce into schools, significantly improving nutrition for children eating school lunches.

I also led the effort to designate October as National Farm to School Month. In order to celebrate the first annual Farm to School Month, schools are inviting local farmers and chefs to visit their classrooms. For more information about Farm to School activities and for guidance on inviting local farmers to your school, please visit FarmToSchool.org.

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress