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July 13, 2006

The Honorable Rush Holt
1019 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Holt:

On behalf of the ASME Center for Public Awareness, I would like to applaud you for introducing H.R. 5139, the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Scholarship Database Act of 2006, to create a one-stop Web portal of scholarships, grants, fellowships, and other forms of financial aid for the students wishing to study STEM disciplines. We commend you for your bold leadership in championing this important legislation, and look forward to working with you to support its enactment.

Even as the number of jobs requiring engineering and scientific training grows, attracting students from the entire spectrum of American society to the STEM fields is still quite a daunting task, with women and minorities severely underrepresented. This web site could ease the burden of finding financial aid, and make the information available to all interested students, regardless of their socioeconomic status. America's leadership in science, engineering and technology is facing significant challenges in an increasingly global economy, and investments like these related to STEM education are the key to ensuring that the nation's future workforce can compete globally in high-tech, high-value industries.

Founded in 1880 as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, ASME, a 120,000-member professional organization focused on technical, educational and research issues of the engineering and technology community, has long been concerned about the strength of STEM education in America's schools, and supports the creation of a technologically literate citizenry.

Again, we are grateful for your leadership and look forward to working with you to support this critical legislation. If you, or your staff, have questions or would desire more information, please contact Melissa Murray, Government Relations Representative at 202/785-7380 or murraym@asme.org.

Sincerely,

Marc W. Goldsmith, P.E.
Vice President
ASME Center for Public Awareness

This position statement represents the considered views of the ASME Center for Public Awareness, and is not necessarily a position of ASME as a whole.