

MATH/SCIENCE PARTNERSHIP COALITION

*American Association of Physics
Teachers*

*American Association of
Engineering Societies*

American Astronomical Society

American Chemical Society

American Geological Institute

American Geophysical Union

American Physical Society

ASEE Engineering Deans Council

*ASME International, Council on
Education*

*Citizens for the Advancement of
Science Education*

*International Technology Education
Association*

*Institute of Electrical and
Electronics Engineers, USA*

*JETS, The Junior Engineering
Technical Society*

*National Alliance of State Science
and Mathematics Coalitions*

*National Council of Teachers of
Mathematics*

*National Science Teachers
Association*

*National Society of Professional
Engineers*

Society of Women Engineers

*Triangle Coalition for Science and
Technology Education*

We, the undersigned groups, urge you to fulfill our nation's commitment to math and science education in H.R. 1, the No Child Left Behind Act, and fully fund the Department of Education's Math and Science Partnership Initiative at \$450 million for fiscal year 2003.

During the next decade, the U.S. demand for scientists and engineers is expected to increase at more than double the rate for all other occupations, according to the National Science Board. The need for a scientifically literate population is essential for our economy and our national security. Moreover, technology and the innovations it has spawned drive productivity gains and economic growth.

But today's high school students are not performing well in math and science overall, and a decreasing number of American students are pursuing degrees in technical fields. America's K-12 students score far below the best in the world on domestic and international tests.

We applaud Congress for tackling this problem head-on by establishing the Math and Science Partnerships as part of the No Child Left Behind Act. These merit-based partnerships between school districts, university science, engineering, and math departments, businesses, and educational organizations seek to improve teacher quality and student achievement in K-12 math and science.

H.R. 1 contains an authorization of \$450 million for the partnerships. Unfortunately, the funding for fiscal year 2002 was a mere \$12.5 million, amounting, in effect, to a 95% cut of dedicated funding for math and science education at the Department of Education. This decrease leaves most states and school districts without dedicated funding to improve education in math and science. Providing strong funding for these key areas through the Department of Education is critical, because the department is the only federal agency charged with improving teacher quality and student achievement across all states and school districts.

We urge Congress to fulfill its commitment to math and science education by supporting a \$450 million appropriation in fiscal year 2003 for the Math and Science Partnerships in the Labor-HHS-Education bill. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Laura Geer Kolton at (202) 872-4384.