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SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA, THE PACIFIC,  
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*House of Representatives*  
*Rubén Hinojosa*  
*15th District, Texas*

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**HELP AMERICA'S HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS COMPETE**  
**Join the Program Request for PALS funding for FY 09**

March 4, 2008

Dear Colleague:

The America COMPETES Act established an important program that will begin to address the quiet crisis affecting our ability to effectively teach science in our nation's high schools. The Partnerships for Access to Laboratory Science program will begin to address the scarcity of science laboratory opportunities in our high need high schools. I urge you to join me in requesting that this program be funded at the authorized amount of \$5 million for fiscal year 2009.

The National Research Council's report on America's High School Labs found that experience in high school labs was poor for most students and practically non-existent for students in low-income or minority communities. We will never produce enough STEM professionals if we do not address this issue.

The Partnerships for Access to Laboratory Science program will partner high need school districts with colleges and universities, and the private sector to improve high school laboratories. Through these partnerships, we will be able to develop models and test effective practices for improving laboratory science in high need schools. We will leverage resources from the local community and the private sector, and build on our base of knowledge of what works in teaching science.

If you would like to join me in signing this letter, please contact Moira Lenehan-Razzuri in my office at 5-2531.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rubén Hinojosa".

Rubén Hinojosa  
Member of Congress

The Honorable Alan Mollohan  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice  
and Science Appropriations  
H309  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice  
and Science Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Mollohan and Ranking Member Frelinghuysen:

As you consider the fiscal year 2009 appropriations bill for Commerce, Justice, and Science, we ask that you include the authorized amount of \$5 million for the Partnerships for Access to Laboratory Science.

The need to address our high school science laboratories is well-documented. Consider the following:

- The National Research Council's report on America's High School Labs found that experience in high school labs was poor for most students and practically non-existent for students in low-income or minority communities.
- The 2006 American Council on Education report, *Increasing the Success of Minority Students in Science and Technology*, identified the lack of a rigorous high school curriculum as a major barrier to completing a college degree in the STEM fields.
- The latest science report card included an astonishing figure – only one in four Black or Hispanic students take the three major laboratory sciences – biology, chemistry, and physics –that are the foundation for future STEM work in college.

We will never produce enough STEM professionals if we do not address this issue.

The Partnerships for Access to Laboratory Science program will partner high need school districts with colleges and universities, and the private sector to improve high school laboratories. Through these partnerships, we will be able to develop models and test effective practices for improving laboratory science in high need schools. We will leverage resources from the local community and the private sector, and build on our base of knowledge of what works in teaching science.

A relatively modest investment will put us on the path to significantly improving science instruction in our high need high schools. We strongly encourage you to include \$5 million for the Partnerships for Access to Laboratory Science for fiscal year 2009.

Sincerely,