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Executive Director

Vance Ablott

The Honorable Al Franken
U.S Senate
309 Hart Senate Office Building,
District of Columbia 20510-2303

October 17, 2011

Dear Senator Franken:

I am writing on behalf of the Triangle Coalition for Science and Technology Education and its member organizations to support the STEM Master Teacher Corps Amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Reauthorization Act of 2011 (ESEA). Earlier this year, in his State of the Union Address, President Obama called for the addition of 100,000 new STEM educators over the next decade and yet studies tell us that many highly qualified, and inspiring young teacher in these critical fields leave the teaching profession for more lucrative careers in industry. While establishing pathways for the creation of new teachers is noble and critical it is essential that we do something to encourage these teachers to remain in classrooms and share their excitement for science, mathematics, engineering and technology with tomorrow's young innovators.

The STEM Master Teacher Corps Amendment will provide a key mechanism for enticing the best and brightest teachers in STEM fields, teachers like the Albert Einstein Distinguished Educators Fellows, to not only choose a teaching career, but to continue their commitment. This ESEA amendment will give them a chance to share their knowledge, their passion, and their creativity with students and fellow educators alike. At the same time it will recognize their unique and critically needed skills and educational background by allowing local education authorities and states to compensate them for their commitment.

The focus of the STEM Master Teacher Corps Amendment is on the top 5% of STEM Teachers and the placement of those teachers in schools and districts with the greatest needs. We know how difficult it is to get good teachers into these schools and districts under any circumstance, but, it is even more of a challenge for these districts to recruit and retain good, let alone great, STEM professionals and your proposed legislation targets just that. We commend your effort to accomplish this critical goal.

Triangle Coalition, and those members listed below, wholeheartedly endorses this critical piece of legislation and urges the Senate to include the critical components of The STEM Master Teacher Corps Amendment in the Elementary and Secondary Education Reauthorization Act of 2011 (ESEA) as it comes before the Senate. The incorporation of The STEM Master Teacher Act within the reauthorized ESEA will ensure that federal K-12 education policy catalyzes the development of a highly skilled STEM workforce which will ensure our competitiveness and leadership in the global economy.

We thank you for your leadership in this field and look forward to working with you to help pass The STEM Master Teacher Corps Act of 2011.

Respectfully,

Vance R. Ablott
Executive Director

In addition to Triangle Coalition, the following member organizations also specifically endorse this legislation:

American Geosciences Institute
Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance
International Technology and Engineering Educators Association
Lincoln Southwest High School
Museum Institute For Teaching Science (MITS, Inc.)
Museum of Science, Boston
Technology Student Association
Teachers Clearinghouse for Science and Society Education
The ITEEA - Council for Supervision and Leadership