

## (June 4, 2008) In Support of STEM Education National Policy Initiatives

Mr./Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.Con.Res. 366, expressing the sense of Congress that increasing American capabilities in science, technology, and mathematics, education should be a national priority.

As Vice Chairman of the House Science and Technology Committee, as well as a former engineer and college professor, I am keenly aware of the need to invest in STEM education for young Americans. Providing high quality jobs for hard working Americans must be our top priority - and in order to accomplish that, we must be proactive. The necessary first step is to improve STEM education in schools, because an educated workforce is the foundation for economic strength.

For generations, science and engineering have been the base of America's economic growth. We were leaders in the industrial revolution and we initiated the internet age. Today, these fields continue to have great potential for growing our economy and employing more Americans. Between 1983 and 2004 the percentage of the U.S. workforce in science and engineering occupations almost doubled. Groundbreaking discoveries and innovative technologies are continually creating new industries and opportunities. Nanotechnology is just one of many exciting industries that are revolutionizing the international economy.

However, if we are not careful, America will be left behind in the next technological revolution. This fact was highlighted nationally when the National Academy of Sciences released its Rising Above the Gathering Storm report, which emphasized the need for government to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, or STEM, education. In the 110th Congress, we confronted this challenge head on by enacting the America COMPETES Act. But additional measures to improve our global standing are certainly welcome.

The resolution before us today will assist the United States in dedicating its resources to the STEM fields and promoting science education policy by educating a broad pool of citizens in these critically important fields. These areas are vital to America's economic competitiveness, and the resolution will help to ensure a brighter future for the next generation of Americans.

Mr./Madam Speaker, we have challenges ahead of us, but the American people have always succeeded in conquering their greatest challenges. With this resolution, we will strengthen America's position in the STEM fields and ensure that all American students receive the skills and knowledge required for success in the 21st century workforce. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.