January 31, 2003

The Honorable Arlen Specter
184 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C.  20510

VIA FAX: 202.228.1229; 202.224.1360

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We urge you to support the House request for $100 million for the Department of Education’s Math & Science Partnership program in the Labor/HHS/Education Appropriation. This necessary increase to Title II, Part B of No Child Left Behind will allow every state to develop merit-based partnerships to improve teacher quality and student achievement in K-12 science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education.

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.

If the conference committee agrees to $100 million for this program, every state will receive an allotment of funding dedicated solely for math and science education programs. If the conference committee accepts an amount less than $100 million, the money will not go to the states for state-level math and science programs; instead, the funds will be administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

Pennsylvania will get an estimated $3.9 million in funding for math and science education, if the Math and Science Partnership program is funded at $100 million.

The Math & Science Partnership program will bring all stakeholders together to improve teacher quality and student achievement. We urge you to support the House request of $100 million so every state can begin this important work. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Patti Burgio at 202.785.7385.