

May 21, 2006

The Honorable Vernon J. Ehlers
Member of Congress
1714 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20015

Dear Representative Ehlers

On behalf of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) and the American Chemical Society (ACS), we would like to thank you for your extraordinary support of STEM education over the years. Thanks to your leadership, STEM education is now a topic of national debate and necessary reforms are in motion that will bolster our nation's continued economic vitality by ensuring our students are prepared for the 21st Century workplace.

NSTA and ACS applaud your latest legislative initiative to ensure that science testing is included in accountability systems. Our organizations support the Science Accountability Act and we look forward to working with your office in moving this legislation forward.

Science assessments are necessary tools for managing and evaluating efforts so that all students receive the science education necessary to successfully prepare them for the future. Including science in the accountability measures will put science on an equal footing with other curriculum areas, highlight areas for improvement in many of our nation's schools, and help to ensure that all learners can succeed academically in science.

We hope that this legislation will spur states to develop quality science assessments that are appropriately aligned with the science curriculum and instruction. These instruments should be designed to accurately assess student understanding of science content, process, and skills, and their ability to think critically and solve problems.

Our organizations are actively promoting high-level student achievement in science, and we believe this legislation is a positive step forward. If we can be of any additional assistance, please contact James Brown of ACS at 202-872-6229 or Jodi Peterson of NSTA at 703-312-9214.

Sincerely,



Dr. Gerald Wheeler
Executive Director
National Science Teachers Association



Dr. E. Ann Nalley
President
American Chemical Society