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BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
OF THE
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 21, 2008

THE NATIONAL MATHEMATICS ADVISORY PANEL REPORT: FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member McKeon, Members of the Committee. Good morning. I am John Castellani, President of Business Roundtable.

Thank you for inviting me to testify before you today on math education and the recent report issued by the National Mathematics Advisory Panel.

I want to thank the members of the Advisory Panel for their important work on behalf of education in the United States.

Business Roundtable is an association of chief executive officers of leading corporations with a combined workforce of more than 10 million employees and $4.5 trillion in annual revenues. Across every sector our CEOs are united in their concern about the continuing reality that far too many students are not graduating from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in either higher education or work. The No Child Left Behind Act is beginning to make a difference, but troubling achievement gaps remain between groups of students in the United States, and between U.S. students and their international peers, particularly in math and science education.

CEOs believe that expanding the talent pool of Americans with a firm grounding in math and science is a critical element of the innovation agenda that the United States must pursue in order to remain competitive in the 21st century. That is why Business Roundtable through its Tapping America's Potential coalition of 16 national business organizations established the goal of increasing the number of Americans graduating with an undergraduate degree in science, technology, engineering or math to 400,000 per year by 2015. The current figure is about 225,000.

Business Roundtable CEOs believe that graduating more students in these key majors is a necessary step toward ensuring continued U.S. technological and economic leadership. Just as important, grounding in these subjects is increasingly necessary for individual success in the modern economy. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that science and engineering employment in the United States will increase 70 percent faster than the rate for all occupations during the next decade. America will create more and more high-wage jobs for technical professionals. The question is whether our children will be qualified to fill them.

It is clear that the United States cannot achieve the TAP goal of 400,000 math, science and engineering graduates annually without first raising U.S. student achievement in mathematics. Math is the gateway that frequently is the reason why students are unprepared to pursue careers in these fields. By the time a student is in 8th grade, if he or she is not on a path to succeed in Algebra, high-wage job opportunities diminish.

There is widespread understanding about the importance of learning to read as the foundation for further learning. There is an equally compelling case for the importance of a strong foundation in mathematics. Many companies have programs that introduce elementary and middle school students to exciting careers in science and engineering and give them hands-on experience with interesting science experiments. However, the companies recognize that it is not enough to get students excited about futures in these fields. They also need to get the foundation of math skills that can turn that excitement into a real possibility.

For example, Texas Instruments has partnered with the CBS television show **NUMB3RS**, which features a mathematician working with his FBI agent brother to solve crime; TI also has developed a Math Scholars program at the University of North Texas Dallas Campus that offers full scholarships with book stipend, to students pursuing their Bachelor of Arts degree in Mathematics with Secondary Certification. The students teach in Dallas for a minimum of two years in return for this scholarship opportunity.

ExxonMobil has partnered with professional golfer Phil Mickelson and his wife Amy to launch the Mickelson ExxonMobil Teachers Academy which provides third- through fifth-grade teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to motivate students to pursue careers in science and math. In addition, Exxon Mobil Corporation committed $125 million to the National Math and Science Initiative, which is working with states and universities to scale-up two proven programs:

- training and incentive programs to increase the number of students taking and passing Advanced Placement math and science courses, and

- Uteach, a program that encourages math and science majors to enter the teaching profession by offering an integrated degree plan, financial assistance, and early teaching experiences for undergraduates.

These and other corporate initiatives are making an important contribution. But policies also need to change. As the National Mathematics Advisory panel recommendations point out, a critical bottleneck in U.S. math education is an inadequate supply of well-qualified and highly prepared math teachers. That is why our member CEOs were so enthusiastic about the math and science education legislation enacted as part of the *America COMPETES Act* last year. Time and again, we learn that well-intentioned math education initiatives fail because of inadequate attention to high-quality teacher preparation and professional development.

Mr. Chairman, this Committee focuses on the education and workforce issues that will determine whether our students and workers can compete and succeed in our changing world economy. The education and workforce policies and programs of the last century were not designed to meet the challenges we are facing today. Business Roundtable stands ready to work with you on new approaches for the 21st century. I thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to testify today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.