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June 30, 2014

The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen  
520 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Shaheen:

On behalf of the ASME Public Affairs and Outreach Sector, I would like to applaud you for introducing S. 2543, the Supporting Afterschool STEM Act, which would support afterschool and out-of-school-time science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs. We commend you for your heroic leadership in championing this important legislation, and look forward to working with you to support its enactment.

Founded in 1880 as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, ASME is a more than 130,000-member professional organization focused on technical, educational and research issues of the engineering and technology community. Since 1992, the ASME Committee on Pre-college Education has been actively developing and supporting programs and materials that strengthen STEM education in the K-12 classroom through its own initiatives and in partnerships with many other organizations.

Given both the current concern for the state of STEM education in U.S. schools and the fact that the number of jobs requiring engineering and scientific training continues to grow, more exposure to quality in-school and out-of-school STEM programs is needed to ensure that America's future leaders remain competitive in the global economy. Further, research has shown the importance of afterschool programs in engaging students in STEM fields and building STEM-relevant skills and proficiencies, especially for girls, students from populations traditionally underrepresented in STEM fields, and students from low socioeconomic circumstances. The "Supporting Afterschool Act" is a timely bill, which will help expand access to quality STEM experiences.

Again, we are grateful for your leadership on this issue and look forward to working with you to support this critical legislation. If you, or your staff, have any questions or would desire more information, please contact Melissa Carl, Government Relations Manager, at 202/785-7380 or [carlm@asme.org](mailto:carlm@asme.org).

Sincerely,

William J. Wepfer, Ph.D.  
Senior Vice President