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The Honorable Kurt Schrader
108 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Schrader:

On behalf of the ASME Public Affairs and Outreach Sector, I would like to applaud you for introducing H.R. 4782, the "Building Understanding, Investment, Learning, and Direction (BUILD) Career and Technical Education Act" of 2014, which creates a two-year, \$20 million pilot program to support efforts to restart career and technical education programs in middle and high schools that suffered during the economic downturn. We applaud 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.

Over the past quarter century, there has been an increased understanding and support by many federal, state, and local policymakers about the importance of strengthening U.S. science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) concepts and skills in the pre-college (K-12) education curriculum. Yet, a more focused effort is needed as U.S. students continue to remain at average or below average on international tests, while the number of workers engaged in scientific and engineering research continues to rapidly increase worldwide.

Greater exposure to quality career and technical education (CTE) STEM programs is needed to ensure that America's future leaders remain competitive in the global economy. CTE STEM programs, especially those built on problem-based learning in a competitive environment, will help high school students have the skills they need to be successful in engineering programs of study or in engineering careers, while also creating opportunities for teachers and students to be mentored by STEM professionals. The "BUILD Career and Technical Education Act" is vital to improving access to quality STEM education for all students.

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.

Sincerely,

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