

January 8, 2007

The Honorable Christopher Dodd  
U.S. Senate  
448 Senate Russell Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Vernon Ehlers  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2182 Rayburn House Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20515-2203

Dear Senator Dodd and Dr. Ehlers:

On behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) I applaud the bicameral efforts to advance science and mathematics education for our children. The overall goal of the recently introduced Standards to Provide Educational Achievement for Kids (SPEAK) Act, which calls for voluntary nationwide standards to ensure that all American children receive a high-quality education in mathematics and science, reflects the objectives of AAAS's own science-education reform initiative, Project 2061.

AAAS would like to emphasize that we believe that the science and math standards to be created by the National Assessment Governing Board should not be developed totally anew, but rather, should be based upon existing, well-tested and widely accepted guidelines. For example standards were set forth by Project 2061's *Benchmarks for Science Literacy*, the National Research Council's *National Science Education Standards (NSES)*, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics' *Principles and Standards for School Mathematics*. The 2009 NAEP Science Framework synthesizes and updates the physical, life, and earth science standards found in *Benchmarks* and *NSES* and should serve as a starting point in science.

AAAS believes that all children, whether they live in Louisiana, Connecticut or Michigan, or any other part of the United States, deserve the best possible education in science and mathematics. We must provide American children with the educational edge they will need to forge a positive path toward solving the global problems of the future, and the SPEAK Act is an important step towards this goal.

AAAS is the world's largest multi-disciplinary science society, representing the interests of ten million scientists worldwide. Fostering science and technology education for everyone and enhancing the S&T workforce are essential parts of our mission. We stand ready to work with you and the U.S. Congress in addressing this critical subject. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Alan I. Leshner