July 16, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H-305, The Capitol Room
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Leader Schumer, and Leader McConnell,

The Alliance for Learning Innovation (ALI) is a coalition of leading philanthropic organizations, thought leaders, and stakeholders that advocates for federal investments in research-based innovations in education that advance student equity, empower practitioners, improve talent pathways, and expand the opportunity needed in a globally competitive world. We are pleased that both H.R. 2225, the *National Science Foundation (NSF) for the Future Act* and S. 1260, the *United States Innovation and Competition Act* would support innovations in education.

As a potential conference process is considered, ALI supports the following provisions in H.R. 2225. We strongly support the provision to establish a new multidisciplinary research and development centers program to help scale up effective PreK-12 STEM education innovations and appreciate the inclusion of collaboration between the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Education (ED). Collaboration between NSF and ED is crucial to ensuring evidence-based education innovations are effective, scalable, and impactful.

ALI is supportive of the creation of the new Directorate for Science and Engineering Solutions and is heartened to see "STEM Education and the Workforce" as one of the priority focus areas. Education and workforce development are critical pieces to tackling science and engineering challenges and our future competitiveness and an important focus for the new directorate. The coalition appreciates the $1.3 billion in funding that is authorized for education and human resources in FY 2022, and we hope to see that money utilized to support research in innovative education and further collaboration between ED and NSF.

ALI is appreciative of the legislation's creation of a grant program to support centers for science and technical education, especially the requirement that the centers develop partnerships between all sectors of the education and workforce system. This collaboration will help drive innovation while meeting workforce needs and maintaining American global competitiveness. ALI supports the creation of a National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) study to identify research gaps on the successful scaling of innovation in PreK-12 education and make recommendations to NSF and the Department of Education on ways to overcome barriers to implementation of education innovation. The coalition also appreciates the inclusion of a decadal survey conducted by NASEM to review opportunities for PreK-12 STEM education research and make research priorities recommendations.

Support of education research is fundamental to ensure innovative education practices are effective and scalable.

ALI is supportive of the following provisions in S. 1260. This includes the bill's proposal to establish a Directorate for Technology and Innovation in NSF. ALI appreciates several goals of this Directorate including enhancing the competitiveness of the United States in the key technology focus areas by improving education in the key technology focus areas and attracting more students to such areas at all levels of education. ALI also appreciates the Directorate's focus to further the creation of a domestic workforce capable of advancing, using, and adapting to key technology focus areas and understanding and improving the impact of key technology focus areas on STEM teaching and learning advancing the key technology focus areas. Additionally, the Coalition supports the bill's proposal to establish a Regional Technology Hubs program. One of the activities of the expected hubs is to develop a region's skilled workforce through partnerships with skills-based education, including the alignment of career technical training and educational programs in the region's elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education. ALI also appreciates that applying consortia need to specify how they will improve STEM education programs in elementary and secondary schools in their region. The support provided by the bill for rural STEM education is also supported by ALI.

ALI also supports the bill's proposal for a National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) study on the 10 most critical emerging science and technology challenges facing the US and recommendations on how to address them, including ways to address education and workforce development needs.

ALI strongly encourages that a final bill include the provisions listed above. The Coalition also encourages that a final bill include more support for education research and development, particularly via the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). While these proposed investments in innovation and education are encouraging, they must be supported by research and evidence-based interventions, particularly given that many existing approaches to education continue to leave large segments of our population behind.

Thank you again for your bipartisan leadership on these bills, which will help scale up innovative STEM education practices, support education research, and strengthen our global competitiveness through a bolstering of the United States STEM and education ecosystem.

Best,

The Alliance for Learning Innovation