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May 4, 2022

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the Center for Individual Freedom (hereinafter "CFIF") and over 300,000 supporters and activists across the nation, I write in support of welcoming greater numbers of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) talent to the United States, as House and Senate negotiators begin the [conferencing](#) process regarding the House's America Creating Opportunities for Manufacturing, Pre-Eminence in Technology, and Economic Strength (COMPETES) Act (H.R.4521) and the Senate's United States Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) (S.1260).

Although the immigration issue engenders ongoing and often heated public debate, most Americans agree that legal immigration to the United States must be encouraged, especially as it relates to people with advanced degrees and valuable expertise that our nation's innovation economy desperately need. Indeed, former President Donald Trump emphasized that point when [introducing](#) his immigration reform plan in May 2019. "We want these exceptional students and workers," he said, "to stay and flourish and thrive in America." We simply cannot allow other nations to gain a competitive edge on the U.S.

That's particularly true with regard to China and its growing menace, as the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) – which in 2019 was [named](#) the "Top Defense and National Security Think Tank" in the world – [captured](#) the looming crisis:

China's supply of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) talent now rivals that of the United States, both in terms of quantity and quality... Without significant reforms to STEM immigration, the United States will struggle to maintain long-term competitiveness and achieve near-term technological priorities...

Accordingly, competition for highly skilled STEM talent is not only a matter of economic competitiveness, but also national security.

Fortunately, provisions of [America COMPETES Act](#) that recently passed in the House would address this issue in a positive manner. Although the broader Act includes objectionable elements that should be excised during the conference process with the Senate, it contains important provisions to welcome more highly skilled talent to America. Those provisions would remove outdated green card caps for applicants with advanced STEM degrees from recognized research institutions. In addition, they would

create a new visa for entrepreneurs in start-up companies and facilitate the path to Legal Permanent Residence (LPR) status for STEM Ph.D. graduates seeking work in the U.S.

As it stands, America faces the threat of millions of unfilled jobs in the semiconductor, manufacturing and defense sectors, as well as trillions of dollars in lost economic production. While the overall bill must be improved in conference, the STEM provisions in the America COMPETES Act will help keep the American economy competitive by easing access to skilled talent for jobs that will otherwise go unfilled, and it will further promote STEM education in U.S. colleges and universities.

Otherwise, potential inventors and entrepreneurs in critical STEM fields will take their talents to other countries, including China, and compete directly against American companies. In an increasingly competitive global economy, we simply cannot let that occur by forfeiting this commonsense opportunity.

Thank you very much for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Mazzella', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeffrey Mazzella
President