

400 South 4th Street
Suite 416
Minneapolis, MN 55415
952-230-4555 office
952-230-4550 fax
www.mhta.org



March 7, 2017

Letter of support for SF 1056 (Nelson) / HF 1289 (Erickson) AP/IB STEM Grant Legislation

Dear Senator Nelson and Members of the E-12 Finance Committee and Representatives Erickson and Loon and Members of the Education Finance Committee:

The Minnesota High Tech Association (MHTA) is pleased to support SF1056/HF1289, promoting Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate grants to school districts to expand coursework opportunities in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) area.

MHTA is an innovation and technology association united in fueling Minnesota's prosperity. With the goal of helping make Minnesota a top-five science and technology state, MHTA advocates for policies that enhance our state's economic competitiveness and foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship. Through public policy engagement and a network of more than 300 member organizations, MHTA is a strong advocate for policies that foster a culture of innovation.

An educated and well prepared workforce is the key to Minnesota's future. No industry is more keenly aware of this than Minnesota's high tech industry. According to the Computing Technology Industry Association's (CompTIA's) 2016 Cyberstates report, Minnesota's technology industry accounts for \$13.3 billion in payroll, employing nearly 142,000 people across the state. The average wage in the high tech industry is \$93,500 – which is 78 percent higher than the average private sector wage.

These high-paying jobs require a highly skilled workforce. Minnesota, however, is facing a workforce shortage in the STEM fields: by 2020, Minnesota will have to fill 155,000 STEM jobs. To help fill this demand, we need policies that support and prepare students for careers in science and technology. The program proposed in this bill will expose more students to STEM classes and perhaps spark their interest to go onto careers in the STEM areas.

For these reasons, the Minnesota High Tech Association is very pleased to support SF 1056/HF 1289, the AP/IB STEM Grant bill. We urge the House Educations Finance Committee and the Senate E-12 Finance Committee to fully support this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret Anderson Kelliher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Margaret Anderson Kelliher
President & CEO
Minnesota High Tech Association