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The Honorable Norm Coleman
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Pryor
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Coleman and Pryor:

I am writing to commend you for supporting our nation's economic competitiveness through the introduction of S. 1020, the Collaborative Opportunities to Mobilize and Promote Education, Technology and Enterprise (COMPETE) Act. The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) and its 460 plus member institutions are very grateful for your leadership in addressing the important issue of American competitiveness.

CGS is committed to collaborating with you and others on developing a coordinated national strategy to enhance America's competitiveness. The European Union, China, India and many other countries are making large investments in education, research and development, greatly expanding their ability to compete in the global economy. The United States cannot afford to coast on its past successes and must invest now to maintain our economic preeminence and national security in the years ahead.

The policy changes you propose include providing a new matching fund program to promote competitiveness through graduate education, extension and enhancement of the R&D tax credit, and improvements to the Federal patent and trademark process. These policy proposals along with others designed to support math and science education in elementary and secondary schools establish a solid foundation for a longer-term, comprehensive agenda designed to maintain our nation's leadership in innovation, research and discovery.

We are also appreciative of your additional legislative efforts to increase global competition for the best and the brightest. As you know, the U.S. must continue welcoming qualified international students to our country and simultaneously implementing policies to address declining participation of domestic students across key fields in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and critical foreign languages.

Thank you for your leadership in addressing American competitiveness and for supporting the vital role played by graduate education as a key part of our national strategy to maintain our leadership in the global economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra W. Stewart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Debra W. Stewart

AFFILIATES

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of Southern
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