

**Testimony in Support of House Bill Number 6121**  
**Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee**  
**February 26, 2015**

Chairmen Bartolomeo and Willis, Ranking Members Witkos and Betts, and Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee, the House Republican Caucus would like to thank the Committee for raising **House Bill Number 6121: An Act Establishing a Fund Providing Scholarships to Women Pursuing Degrees in the STEM Field.**

This bill is an important House Republican proposal, and if passed, will require the Board of Regents for Higher Education to establish a fund, which shall accept private donations, for the purpose of providing scholarships to women pursuing degrees in the STEM Fields: science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

Often underrepresented in these disciplines, young women have every bit the ability, drive and desire to make a lasting impact in math and science. Creating a fund to specifically target and support women in the STEM fields will boost the popularity of these programs, and provide young women with the incentive to follow their passion, in pursuit of a degree in these fast-evolving fields.

Our colleges and universities across the state are continually expanding technology offerings to students. Passage of Proposed Bill No. 6121 will help further that mission. Allowing private contributions to support scholarships for women pursuing degrees in the STEM fields ensures participation and excitement in these evolving disciplines. Advancing the employment of women in these traditionally male-dominated fields should not only be a laudable goal of this committee, but absolutely within reach.

I urge the Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement to pass Proposed Bill Number 6121 allow for the establishment of a fund dedicated to accepting private contributions, for the purpose of providing scholarships for women pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. Please allow the full General Assembly the opportunity to debate this issue, and to pass legislation to continue, and to expand the career goals and promising futures of young women in our state.