

Early Support for the Rosen and Hyde-Smith STEM Restoring Employment Skills through Targeted Assistance, Re-entry, and Training (RESTART) Act

“The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) has long supported return to work programs such as the STEM Reentry Task Force and iReLaunch that help lessen the gap between women who are capable of relaunching their careers but lack access to return to the STEM workforce. SWE knows that although over ninety percent of women STEM professionals who have to leave the workforce wish to return, only forty percent are able to do so,” **said Karen Horting, Executive Director and CEO of the Society of Women Engineers.** “Therefore, we applaud Sens. Rosen and Hyde-Smith for introducing the STEM RESTART Act, which recognizes the successes of existing “returnship” programs that hire on eighty-six percent of participants at large companies closing the STEM opportunity gap while creating quality jobs. By providing federal backing, the STEM RESTART Act helps small businesses looking for qualified talent do likewise to restore America’s bench of STEM talent. These professionals have skills and knowledge that contribute to the success of the companies that host these programs and the health of the country’s economy. Current economic circumstances need initiatives like this one, and we look forward to supporting efforts to get this legislation to the president’s desk.”

“SIA strongly supports the introduction of the STEM RESTART Act and we commend Senator Rosen for her bipartisan leadership in introducing this important legislation,” **said Don Erickson, CEO of the Security Industry Association (SIA).** “SIA applauds the bill’s intent to encourage small- and medium-sized businesses to attract more diverse talent in the STEM fields. We believe diversity and inclusion have the power to help our industry advance, to help bring in the best talent and to recognize new ideas brought in by diverse perspectives. We firmly believe the STEM RESTART Act will help accomplish our goals in cultivating a more diverse workforce.”

“We applaud Sen. Rosen and Sen. Hyde-Smith for introducing the STEM RESTART Act,” **said Benjamin Corb, Public Affairs Director of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.** “Women’s careers have disproportionately suffered as a result of the coronavirus pandemic compared to men and this legislation would help women scientists return to the STEM field. We urge members of Congress to support this important legislation to bolster American science.”

“We are delighted at the bipartisan leadership of Sen. Rosen and Sen. Hyde-Smith in introducing the STEM RESTART Act. Our country needs to get more people back to work in high-paying STEM jobs and this bill boosts those efforts by promoting the novel practice of “returnships”, whereby industry can provide a supportive pathway for STEM professionals to re-enter the workforce after an extended absence,” **said James Brown, Executive Director of the STEM Education Coalition.** “The bill would prioritize federal funding to target individuals that are out of work or underemployed and who are also persons who are also part of historically underrepresented groups in STEM, including women, Black and Latino persons. This is a very creative way to help solve an important STEM education challenge.”

“Our research shows that women voluntarily leave the tech workforce at a higher rate than their male counterparts,” **said Brenda Darden Wilkerson, CEO of AnitaB.org.** “As an organization dedicated to gender equity within the technical industry, AnitaB.org proudly advocates for opportunities for women to reenter their careers, provide for their families, and contribute valuable innovations to our economy. The bipartisan STEM RESTART Act represents a great step forward for the thousands of individuals who are looking to return to the workforce during this time, and we thank Senators Rosen and Hyde-Smith for their leadership on this important topic.”