Washington, D.C. - U.S. Rep. David Price (D-NC) today announced the success of his effort to make community college students eligible for a major federal scholarship to help them become science and math teachers.

The provision was approved by the House of Representatives late yesterday as part of a bill to re-authorize the National Science Foundation and support other government efforts designed to bolster the competitiveness of the American economy (H.R. 2272). The bill was approved by a vote of 367-57 in the House. The Senate approved the bill unanimously later last night, thus sending the measure to the President's desk for his signature.

The Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship program provides grants to institutions of higher learning for scholarships and stipends for math and science majors who commit to teaching those subjects in "high-need" schools. In return for up to $10,000 in financial aid per year (up to 3 years), students must commit to teach two years for every year they receive the scholarship.

"We are all too familiar with the impending teacher shortage in our country," Price said. "These scholarships will help us fill the need for qualified teachers who provide instruction in subjects that are critical to the future of American innovation."

The legislation that the House originally passed left uncertainty as to the scholarship eligibility of community and junior college students. Martin Lancaster, President of the North Carolina Community College System, alerted Price to this omission in the bill. In turn, Price worked with Chairman Bart Gordon of the House Science and Technology Committee on a conference-level amendment that ensures their eligibility.

"North Carolina has made great progress in establishing a seamless transition from community colleges to four-year schools and teacher certification," Price said. "Community colleges represent a great potential source of 'home-grown teachers' who are likely to stay in rural, inner-city and other underserved areas."

H.R. 2272 is a compilation of several bills with bipartisan support designed to further American innovation and competitiveness. The legislation comes in response to a 2005 National

Academies report, "Rising Above the Gathering Storm," which predicted that in an increasingly competitive global economy, the U.S. would lose technology jobs to other nations if it did not pay more attention to math and science research and education.

In order to address these pressing needs, the legislation:

• Invests in roughly 25,000 new teachers over the next three years through professional development, summer training institutes, graduate education assistance, and scholarships through the Noyce Scholarship and the Math and Science Partnerships Program.

• Invests in basic research and development and puts us on a path to double funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the Department of Energy's Office of Science.

• Ensures more highly qualified teachers in the fields of mathematics, science, engineering, technology, and critical foreign languages through grant programs that provide baccalaureate degrees in these areas with concurrent teacher certification. Also authorizes competitive grants to increase the number of teachers serving high-needs schools and increases the number of qualified Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) teachers and expands student access to these programs.

• Establishes a public-private partnership with the business community to identify 'high needs' fields, and to train mathematicians, scientists and engineers to enter those jobs.

• Broadens the participation of minorities and women in science and engineering fields at all levels, from kindergarten students to advanced researchers.

# # #