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Remarks of Bobbie Kilberg, NVTC President & CEO Senate Finance Committee Subcommittee on Education February 1, 2011

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, I am Bobbie Kilberg, President and CEO of the Northern Virginia Technology Council (NVTC). Through its almost 1,000 member companies, universities, colleges and organizations, NVTC represents about 200,000 employees in our region and an exceptionally large number of higher education students.

I am pleased to have NVTC Chair Brad Antle, President & CEO of Salient Federal Solutions, with me today, as well as senior executives from the following member companies and our member universities and colleges. Please stand when I name your affiliation.

- ACS, a Xerox Company
- Alion Science and Technology
- Appian
- Cox Communications
- George Mason University
- ICF International
- McLean Capital
- Micron Technology
- Northern Virginia Community College
- Northrop Grumman
- NTELX
- Orbital Sciences Corporation
- Salient Federal Solutions and
- Second Venue

We all are here today to express NVTC's support of the Virginia Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2011. To begin, we want to thank Governor McDonnell and Secretary Robinson for putting forward this proposal and Senators Edd Houck and Tommy Norment for jointly sponsoring this important legislation. We'd also like to recognize Tom Farrell, Chairman and CEO of Dominion Resources, and the other members of the Governor's Commission on Higher Education Reform, Innovation and Investment including NVTC Board members Raj Narasimhan of Micron Technology, Charles Steger of Virginia Tech and Todd Stottlemeyer of IT Solutions for their role in proposing and supporting these reforms.

“Preparing Virginians for the Top Jobs of the 21st Century” – the objective of this legislation – is a critical goal of our technology community. As we look to the future, it is clear that our growth and success will rely on our ability to produce first class

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technology professionals in sufficient numbers to support Virginia's statewide technology economy so that we can continue to compete domestically and globally.

NVTC is pleased that this legislation not only addresses funding stability for our institutions of higher education, but also gives clear policy goals for targeting investments for the greatest return. And it acknowledges the role technology can and should play in enhancing instruction and resource sharing among Virginia's schools. These investments will make higher education more effective and efficient.

In addition, this legislation highlights the critical role that applied research and science, technology, engineering and math instruction play in job creation. Providing incentives for awarding more STEM degrees is smart public policy. NVTC is fortunate to have the presidents of George Mason University, Virginia Tech, The George Washington University, Marymount University, and Northern Virginia Community College on our Board of Directors. All of these institutions are hard at work to increase STEM graduates in the Commonwealth.

Let me make a specific comment about our community colleges. We are of course particularly proud of Northern Virginia Community College, which has grown by 18,000 students in five years to a total of 78,000, and the role it plays in providing our employers with well-trained workers. We also believe there is tremendous potential in the community college transfer program, which is working effectively between NVCC and George Mason University. This is one of the most efficient ways the Commonwealth can significantly increase the number of Virginians earning a bachelor's degree while reducing costs for the students and the state.

In conclusion, we know that you will be making many difficult decisions in adopting a budget and policies that meet Virginia's needs. This legislation and the proposed budget amendments to support it are investments in further advancing the gains Virginia has made in building a globally branded technology business climate. We ask for your support.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to express NVTC's support of this promising initiative. We look forward to continuing to champion higher education's role in growing Virginia's economy.