

September 16, 2019

Representative Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
1236 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), and the higher education community at large, we write to ask that you and the members you lead vote in favor of H.R. 2486, the Fostering Undergraduate Talent by Unlocking Resources for Education (FUTURE) Act when it comes up for a vote tomorrow.

This bicameral, bipartisan bill was introduced by Representative Alma Adams (D-NC) and Representative Mark Walker (R-NC) to extend vital mandatory funding for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education, student completion and infrastructure programs benefiting HBCUs, TCUs, HSIs, and other MSIs in Title III, Part F of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) before it expires on September 30, 2019.

Mandatory funding for STEM education and other programs at these important institutions was first instituted when the College Cost and Reduction Act of 2007 was signed into law. This bill passed both the House and Senate on a bipartisan basis and allowed for mandatory funding to flow to HBCUs, TCUs, HSIs and other MSIs from 2008 to 2009. Shortly thereafter, the Higher Education Opportunity Act, which maintained this important stream of funding, passed both the House and Senate on a bipartisan basis and was signed into law in 2008.

It was not until 2010 that these mandatory funds were extended for an additional ten years because Congress recognized the value in securing funding for institutions that served large numbers of low-income, first-generation college students of color.

According to a recent report, there are more than “20 million young people of color in the United States whose representations in STEM education pathways and in the STEM workforce [fall] . . . far below their proportions of the general population.”¹ It was emphasized in this

¹ Espinosa, L.L., McGuire, K., & Jackson, L.M. (2019). Minority serving institutions: America’s underutilized resource for strengthening the STEM workforce. Retrieved from The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Website:
<https://www.nap.edu/download/25257>

report that “the educational outcomes and STEM readiness of students of color will have direct implications on America’s economic growth, national security, and global prosperity.”²

Furthermore, a report released by the White House’s National Science and Technology Council stated that the “national benefits of a strong STEM foundation cannot be fully realized until all members of society have equitable access to STEM education and [until] there is much broader participation by those historically underserved and underrepresented in STEM fields...”³ The report goes on to highlight the importance of diversity in the workplace leading to more engaged, innovative, and higher-performing organizations.

It is clear that diversifying our STEM workforce should be a priority for our country and would pay immediate dividends to our economy. The FUTURE Act helps avoid a \$2.55 billion-dollar cliff in funding over 10 years for HBCUs, TCUs, HSIs, and other MSIs by extending mandatory funding until Fiscal Year 2021. This bill is revenue neutral and allows these important institutions to continue the valuable work of offering quality STEM programs.

We thank you for your consideration of this request, and look forward to working with you to enact this legislation before the September 30 deadline.

Sincerely,



Ted Mitchell
President

On behalf of:

Achieving the Dream, Inc.
ACPA-College Student Educators International
ACT, Inc.
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Professors

² Ibid.

³ National Science & Technology Council. (2018). Charting a course for success: America’s strategy for stem education. Retrieved from White House Website:
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/STEM-Education-Strategic-Plan-2018.pdf>

American Council on Education
American Dental Education Association
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
APPA, Leadership in Educational Facilities
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
Common App
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Council on Social Work Education
EDUCAUSE
ETS
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of System Heads
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
Thurgood Marshall College Fund
UNCF
UPCEA