

December 14, 2022

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-221, The Capitol Room
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Schumer and Leader McConnell:

On behalf of the undersigned higher education associations, we write in support of the sections included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would strategically grow the research capability and STEM workforce at historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and minority serving institutions (MSIs). In particular, we support Section 222 “Outreach to HBCUs and other MSIs regarding National Security Innovation Network programs”; Section 223 “Report and pilot program based on recommendations regarding defense research capacity at HBCUs and other MSIs”; and Section 1083 the “Ronald V. Dellums Memorial Fellowship in STEM.”

These new programs represent a strategic investment to increase the research capacity at HBCUs and MSIs, as well as diversify the essential STEM workforce to address national security needs. As stated in the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Mathematics (NASEM) 2022 report “Defense Research Capacity at HBCUs and other Minority Institutions: Transitioning from Good Intentions to Measurable Outcomes,” HBCUs and Minority Institutions (MIs) represent a valuable resource to expand the Department of Defense’s (DOD) government and extramural workforce and science and technology enterprises. The report found that “public and private HBCUs, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Hispanic- Serving Institutions, and other two- and four- year MIs are positioned to make strong and uniquely important contributions to the defense research enterprise, offering DOD an opportunity to widen its talent pool and diversify STEM research and ultimately strengthen its ability to support national security.”¹

America’s colleges and universities, including our HBCUs, TCUs, HSIs, and MSIs, continue to support DOD and the federal government in addressing issues of national security. These new programs will open new pathways for more diverse institutions to participate in these important programs and allow DOD to grow the national security workforce. For these reasons we applaud congressional efforts to create these programs and support their inclusion in the final FY 23 NDAA bill.

¹ <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/26399/defense-research-capacity-at-historically-black-colleges-and-universities-and-other-minority-institutions>

Respectfully,



Ted Mitchell
President

Cc: The Honorable Jack Reed, Chairman, U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services
The Honorable James Inhofe, Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services

On behalf of:

- American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
- American Association of Community Colleges
- American Association of State Colleges and Universities
- American Council on Education
- Association of American Universities
- Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
- Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
- College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
- Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation
- Council of Graduate Schools
- EDUCAUSE
- Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
- National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO)
- National Association of College and University Business Officers
- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
- State Higher Education Executive Officers Association