

# AMERICA'S CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

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March 11, 2016

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The Honorable Hal Rogers  
Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey:

The Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Education and Labor Taskforce respectfully requests that you restore and increase federal support to our nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs). In particular, the CBC asks for your Committee's full support for the programs outlined in the attached document in the FY 2017 appropriations bills that you will soon write.

Collectively, these institutions enroll more than 700,000 primarily first-generation, low-income and minority students. HBCUs, PBIs and students who attend these institutions rely heavily on federal assistance when compared to traditional schools. For example, 71 percent of students who attend four-year HBCUs depend on federal Pell Grants for their education, a substantially greater share than the 41 percent of students at all four-year, nonprofit colleges and universities.

HBCUs are the cornerstone of higher education for the African-American community, yet these institutions along with PBIs have suffered disproportionately from the implementation of unfavorable federal policies in recent years. While we appreciate the \$23 million increase provided for Title III Institutional Assistance to HBCUs and PBIs in the FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act, Title III support to these institutions remains below its FY 2010 level, down \$28 million (6 percent) in nominal terms. Coupled with cuts to Title III Institutional Aid, modifications to Pell Grant eligibility requirements and restrictions on federal loans have resulted in a loss of more than \$250 million in federal support, jeopardizing the ability of HBCUs and PBIs to deliver high-quality educational and support services to their students.

These federal cuts have occurred at a time when it has never been more important for increasing numbers of Americans to earn a college degree to boost our country's global competitiveness. For instance, over the past forty years, the percentage of jobs requiring postsecondary education more than doubled from 28 percent to 59 percent (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2010). By 2018, two-thirds of all jobs will require postsecondary education (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2010). Employers demand a more educated workforce, but federal investments in institutions that produce the highest percentages of low-income, first-generation



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and minority students have decreased. Despite continued fiscal austerity, HBCUs and PBIs nevertheless provide superior educational opportunities that build a foundation for future success. For example, HBCUs represent approximately three percent of all four-year colleges and universities, yet these institutions confer 18 percent of bachelor's degrees awarded to African Americans. In science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields, HBCUs grant 25 percent of the bachelor's degrees awarded to African Americans. Further, HBCUs comprise the top ten colleges that graduate the largest number of African Americans who earn doctoral degrees.

For over a hundred years, HBCUs have served as an engine of social mobility for millions of students. The communities that we represent rely on these institutions to educate our students, uplift our neighborhoods and revitalize our local economies. As you develop the FY 2017 appropriations bills, we urge you to fully support HBCUs and PBIs so that they can continue delivering educational experiences that prepare the next generation of leaders with the skills needed to strengthen our economy and improve the well-being of our great nation.

We appreciate your consideration of our requests. The amounts indicated that follow are the minimum levels of funding needed to restore federal investment in HBCUs. While we support funding of new programs, we do not endorse cutting Title III, Part B or other already-established HBCU accounts to fund new programs. If you have any questions about the content of this letter, please contact Kendra Brown with Chairman Butterfield at (202) 225-3101, Jill Hunter-Williams with Rep. Davis at (202) 225-5006, or Sylvie Spewak with Rep. Fattah at (202) 225-4001. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



G. K. Butterfield  
Chair, Congressional Black Caucus



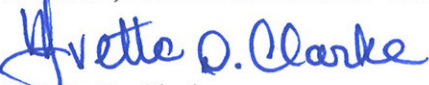
Danny K. Davis  
Co-Chair, Education & Labor Taskforce



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member, Education & Labor Taskforce



David Scott  
Member, Education & Labor Taskforce



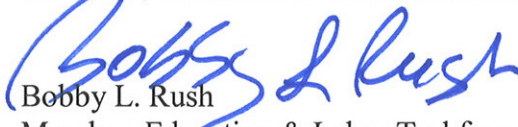
Yvette D. Clarke  
Member, Education & Labor Taskforce



Cedric Richmond  
Member, Education & Labor Taskforce



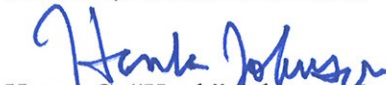
Chaka Fattah  
Co-Chair, Education & Labor Taskforce



Bobby L. Rush  
Member, Education & Labor Taskforce



Gwen S. Moore  
Member, Education & Labor Taskforce



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member, Education & Labor Taskforce



Frederica S. Wilson  
Member, Education & Labor Taskforce

Attachment

cc:

The Hon. Robert Aderholt, Chairman, House Agriculture-Rural Development-FDA Subcommittee  
The Hon. Sam Farr, Ranking Member, House Agriculture-Rural Development-FDA Subcommittee  
The Hon. John Culberson, Chairman, House Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee  
The Hon. Mike Honda, Acting Ranking Member, House Commerce-Justice-Science Subcommittee  
The Hon. Rodney Frelinghuysen, Chairman, House Defense Subcommittee  
The Hon. Peter Visclosky, Ranking Member, House Defense Subcommittee  
The Hon. John Carter, Chairman, House Homeland Security Subcommittee  
The Hon. Lucille Roybal-Allard, Ranking Member, House Homeland Security Subcommittee  
The Hon. Ken Calvert, Chairman, House Interior Subcommittee  
The Hon. Betty McCollum, Ranking Member, House Interior Subcommittee  
The Hon. Tom Cole, Chairman, Labor-HHS-ED Subcommittee  
The Hon. Rosa L. DeLauro, Ranking Member, Labor-HHS-ED Subcommittee  
The Hon. Mario Diaz-Balart, Chairman, House Transportation-HUD Subcommittee  
The Hon. David Price, Ranking Member, House Transportation-HUD Subcommittee

## CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FY 2017 APPROPRIATIONS REQUESTS

The top ten funding priorities include:

1. **LHHS:** Strengthening HBCUs Undergraduate Program (Title III, Part B, Sec. 323), \$267 million discretionary/\$85 million mandatory;
2. **LHHS:** HBCU Capital Financing Program (Title III, Part D), \$25 million, and Raise Statutory Cap on Loan Guarantees;
3. **LHHS:** Strengthening HBCUs Graduate Program (Title III, Part B, Sec. 326), \$69 million;
4. **LHHS:** Strengthening Predominantly Black Institutions (Title III, Part A, Sec. 318), \$11 million discretionary/\$15 million mandatory;
5. **LHHS:** Masters Degree Programs at HBCUs and PBIs (Title VII, Secs. 723 and 724), \$11.5 million;
6. **LHHS:** Five-Fifths Agenda for America Initiative, \$50 million;
7. **NSF:** “Broadening Participation” programs – LSAMP, HBCU-UP, AGEF, CREST, \$125 million;
8. **DOD:** HBCU/Minority Institutions Program, \$40 million;
9. **AG:** 1890 Research, Education, Extension, and Facility Programs, \$161.55 million; and
10. **INTERIOR:** HBCU Historic Preservation Program, \$10 million.

### Agriculture

**1890 Education and Facility Programs** – Congress provides resources to American public land-grant universities, including many HBCUs, to support education and research, and to upgrade facilities. We ask that the House and Senate maintain their commitment to these programs by supporting small increases in allocations for 1890 Education and Facility Programs in the FY 2017 Agriculture Appropriations bill.

- *Evans-Allen Research Funding* – \$60.5 million
- *1890 Extension Programs* – \$49.35 million
- *1890 Institutions Capacity Building Grants* – \$30 million
- *1890 Institutions Facility Improvements* – \$21.7 million

### Commerce-Justice-Science

**National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) – Minority University Research & Education Program** – NASA partners with higher education institutions to ensure underrepresented students can meet future workforce needs in STEM fields. The FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act supports this program at \$32 million. We request a \$33 million appropriation in the FY 2017 Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations bill. Given that the top ten producers of African-American Ph.D.s in STEM fields are HBCUs, these institutions need every financial investment to enhance their success.

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – Education Partnerships Program/Minority-Serving Institutions** – NOAA’s Office of Education partners with HBCUs and Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) to increase the number of students from underrepresented communities who are trained and graduate with degrees in particular science fields. This department also provides scholarships to students to complete degrees in the STEM fields related to NOAA’s mission. The FY 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act allocates \$14.4 million for this program. To ensure more scholarship support and STEM training at HBCUs and MSIs, we ask the funding be raised to \$16 million.

**National Science Foundation (NSF)** – The overall U.S. science and technology workforce exceeded 7.4 million workers in 2012 and it will continue to grow significantly through 2018, to an estimated 8.7 million STEM workers. However, only one to two percent of African-American 9<sup>th</sup> graders eventually graduate with STEM degrees ten years after entering high school. We ask that your Committee increase investments from \$113 million to \$125 million for the four NSF “Broadening Participation” programs that help HBCUs and MSIs bolster their STEM programs:

- *Centers for Research Excellence in Science and Technology (CREST)* - \$26 million
- *Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP)* - \$9 million
- *HBCU Undergraduate Program (HBCU-UP)* - \$39 million
- *Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP)* - \$51 million

**Minority Institutions Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity** – This program was authorized in the *Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008*. Funds assist HBCUs and MSIs in improving their instrumentation, connectivity, hardware, and software for instruction and research. The program complements the President’s goal of increasing access to broadband technology across the country. We support an allocation of \$50 million to improve the technological competitiveness of under-resourced institutions serving high percentages of students underrepresented in higher education.

## **Defense**

**Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions Program (HBCU/MI)** – The HBCU/MI program supports research on HBCU campuses and helps to attract students to high-demand fields that protect our nation’s national security efforts. Unfortunately, the President’s FY 2017 budget proposes deep and damaging cuts in this essential program. We request that the House continue to support this important program by not only maintaining but also increasing the federal investment to \$40 million in the FY 2017 Department of Defense Appropriations bill. This investment will build and enhance STEM capabilities related to national defense priorities on HBCU campuses.

## **Education**

**Title III Strengthening Institutions Programs (Discretionary and Mandatory)** – Title III programs are the cornerstone of federal support to HBCUs and PBIs, providing critical operating and capital resources for institutions. Discretionary funding provides support for undergraduate and graduate education programs and support services that are essential for student success. Additionally, Title III discretionary funding enables these under-resourced institutions to build their endowments and financial sustainability. Title III mandatory funding supplements and works in conjunction with the discretionary formula program to enhance academic instruction at HBCUs and PBIs, especially in the STEM fields. We ask that Congress restore funding to FY 2010 levels for the Title III programs in the FY 2017 LHHS Appropriations bill, as listed below.

- *Title III, Part B, Section 323, HBCU Undergraduate (Discretionary)* - \$267 million
- *Title III, Part F, Section 371, HBCU Undergraduate (Mandatory)* - \$85 million
- *Title III, Part B, Section 326, HBCU Graduate (Discretionary)* - \$69 million
- *Title III, Part A, Section 318, PBI Undergraduate (Discretionary)* - \$11 million
- *Title III, Part A, Section 318, PBI Undergraduate (Mandatory)* - \$15 million
- *Title VII, Sections 723 and 724, Masters Degree Programs at HBCUs and PBIs (Mandatory)* - \$11.5 million

***HBCU Capital Financing Program*** – The HBCU Capital Financing program provides low-cost capital to finance physical improvements on HBCU campuses by guaranteeing and administering loans. As a result of these investments, HBCUs are able to provide students with modern learning and living environments. We urge the Committee to increase loan subsidies by \$4.5 million to \$25 million in FY 2017. This increase would support approximately \$85 million in new loans to 2-8 additional institutions for a total annual loan volume of \$390 million. We also request appropriations language to exceed the cumulative loan guarantee statutory cap, which the Education Department recommends for FY 2017 and has been approved by Congress in previous years.

***Masters Degree Programs at HBCUs and PBIs*** – This program provides aid to HBCUs and PBIs to recruit and retain undergraduate students for graduate studies. We request FY 2017 funding at \$11.5 million for this program to continue the success of STEM programs at the graduate level on HBCU and PBI campuses.

***Howard University*** – Howard University was federally-chartered in 1867. This appropriation provides partial support to Howard University for construction, development, improvement, endowment and maintenance of the University and its hospital. Given the critical role of this institution in educating African-American students and aiding African-American residents in the DC region, we request \$250 million. These funds will enable this comprehensive, research-oriented, flagship institution to continue to provide a high-quality and affordable educational experience to its predominantly African-American student body.

***Minority Science and Engineering Program Improvement Program*** – This program supports the participation of underrepresented minority youth in STEM through outreach and hands-on learning projects and supports a marketing campaign aimed at encouraging minorities to enter the STEM fields. We request an \$11 million appropriation for FY 2017.

***Five-Fifths Agenda for America Initiative*** – To support the Administration's My Brother's Keeper initiative, the CBC proposes \$50 million for a new program called the Five-Fifths Agenda for America to expand educational outcomes for African-American males. The objective of this program is to demonstrate how colleges and universities, especially HBCUs, and K-12 schools can forge partnerships to help African-American males prepare for and get to and through college by implementing research-based best practices. This important initiative could be funded as part of the \$100 million requested by the Administration for the First in the World initiative under the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education.

***Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Grant Program*** – TQP grant funds improve the quality of new teachers by creating partnership among institutions, high-need school districts and/or high-need early childhood education programs. Given the urgent need to improve diversity in the teaching profession and the fact that TQP grants historically serve few institutions with large percentages of low-income and minority students, we request bill language to prioritize funding for institutions eligible for assistance under Title III or Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965. In order to do this, we respectfully request \$43 million.

***HBCU and MSI Innovation for Completion Fund*** – This proposal would support competitive grants to HBCUs and MSIs to provide research-based strategies to significantly enhance minority student college enrollment and completion. For this program, we respectfully request \$30 million in the FY 2017 LHHS Appropriations bill.

In addition to the important priorities listed above, we also want to express strong support for two initiatives proposed for mandatory funding that would support historic new federal investments in HBCUs and PBIs, providing new impetus toward closing a significant college attainment gap between African-American and white Americans. Today, young African-Americans between the ages of 25 and 29 are only half as likely as their white counterparts to hold a college degree. The two initiatives below would make a substantial difference in reducing the barriers to college access and completion for low-income, minority students:

***America's College Promise/Pathways to Student Success for HBCUs and MSIs*** – This proposal would make a significant contribution to raising college attainment and reducing student debt for minority students who are underrepresented among college-educated Americans. It would enable responsible, eligible students to earn an associate's degree, certificate, or credit towards a bachelor's degree debt free. In addition, the proposal seeks to provide a pathway to a four-year degree by funding grants to four-year HBCUs and MSIs to significantly reduce tuition for low-income students for up to 60 academic credits. For this request, we respectfully request \$1.257 billion for the first year of the initiative.

***College Opportunity and Graduation Bonus Program*** – We strongly support \$548 million in FY 2017 for the President's initiative to reward colleges that successfully enroll and graduate a significant number of low- and moderate-income students on time, provided that the proposal is modified to also include institutions that graduate a significant *percentage* of low- and moderate-income students on time. HBCUs and MSIs have a demonstrated history in graduating a large segment of the nation's student populations who are underrepresented in higher education. For example, HBCUs, PBIs, and HSIs educate approximately half of all African-American and Latino students enrolled in college today. To improve educational success of students who are historically underrepresented in higher education, we request \$548 million for the first year of funding.

## **Homeland Security**

***Science & Technology Directorate – University Programs, Homeland Security Centers of Excellence*** – The Homeland Security Centers of Excellence bring together leading experts to conduct multidisciplinary research to enhance homeland security capabilities. We respectfully request \$33 million in the FY 2017 Homeland Security Appropriations bill to strengthen our nation's national security.

## **Housing and Urban Development**

***University Community Fund*** – The University Community Fund provides competitive grants to assist universities, including HBCUs and MSIs, in forming partnerships with the communities in which they are located. These partnerships undertake a range of activities that foster and achieve neighborhood revitalization, with special attention to underserved communities. We request \$11 million in the FY 2017 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.

## **Interior**

***HBCU Historic Preservation Program*** – Considering that most HBCU campuses are over 125 years old, historic preservation costs are daunting. In 1998, the National Trust for Historic Preservation designated the nation's HBCUs among the nation's most endangered historic sites. While there is a matching requirement that is challenging for some institutions, these funds provide urgently needed assistance to HBCUs. These institutions are combating rising financial challenges associated with maintaining historic properties. We request \$10 million for this program in the FY 2017 Interior Appropriations bill so that some of our nation's most historically significant structures are not lost forever.