



United Negro College Fund, Inc.
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UNCF.org

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Denmark, SC

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Wilberforce, OH

Wiley College
Marshall, TX

Xavier University
New Orleans, LA

April 19, 2016

The Honorable John McCain
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen McCain and Thornberry and Ranking Members Reed and Smith:

On behalf of UNCF (United Negro College Fund) and the 37 private historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) we represent, I am writing once again to encourage your strong support for additional investments for the HBCU/Minority Institutions (HBCU/MI) program funded within the U.S. Department of Defense, Research, Development, Test and Evaluation account. As you know, this program not only bolsters our country's national security, but also strengthens the scientific and technological infrastructure of HBCUs in support of defense priorities.

We are grateful for your leadership on the FY 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, which authorized \$36 million, a \$10 million increase to the FY 2016 Department of Defense request, for the HBCU/MI program. This investment continues an essential federal partnership with the nation's HBCUs. However, the President's proposed FY 2017 funding level of \$24 million for the HBCU/MI program insufficiently supports the need for diversifying our nation's military research base. To that end, UNCF and our member institutions urge you to increase the FY 2017 authorization for this program to \$40 million.

This network of 106 HBCUs provides tremendous value for the students and the nation. HBCUs represent approximately 3 percent of all two-year and four-year colleges and universities; enroll 10 percent of all African American undergraduates; confer 18 percent of African American undergraduate degrees; and graduate 25 percent of African Americans with undergraduate degrees in STEM fields.

Through research, training and collaborative activities in scientific and engineering disciplines, the HBCU/MI Program enables HBCU faculty and students to work directly with military laboratories in technical areas of interest to DoD, such as cyber security. In recent years, Alabama State University, Alabama A & M University, Alcorn State University (Mississippi), Benedict College (South Carolina), Bowie State University (Maryland), Clafin University (South Carolina), Fisk University (Tennessee), Jackson State University (Mississippi), Miles College (Alabama), Morgan State University (Maryland),

Oakwood University (Alabama), Tennessee State University, Tuskegee University (Alabama) and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore have received HBCU/MI competitive grants for national security-related research projects. North Carolina A&T State University, Norfolk State University (Virginia) and Prairie View A&M University (Texas) established DoD Centers of Excellence in autonomy, cyber security and research data analysis. In addition, the HBCU/MI Program created STEM Prep projects at HBCUs, including Paul Quinn College in Texas and Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, so that more students of color can graduate with the requisite skills to work in critical defense related fields.

HBCUs already have compiled an impeccable record of producing graduates majoring in STEM disciplines. By supporting research, training, mentoring and other activities that help students enter the workforce in STEM fields, the HBCU/MI Program is helping America meet the global security challenges that face us today.

We thank you for your consideration of this request and your recognition of the important contributions that HBCUs are making to our national defense research, development and workforce needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael L. Lomax". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and last name "Lomax" clearly legible. There is a small mark at the end of the signature that could be interpreted as "Ph.D." or a similar abbreviation.

Michael L. Lomax, Ph.D.
President & CEO