

## **Women and Underrepresented Minorities in STEM Booster Act of 2025**

- Women, racial minorities, LGBTQ+ people and people with disabilities **remain underrepresented in the U.S. workforce** in the fields of **science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM)**.
- This **underrepresentation arises from barriers** that these groups face in pursuing STEM education, research and career opportunities.
- Moreover, women, racial minorities, and persons identifying as LGBTQ+ who have entered the STEM workforce **face obstacles that cause them to leave STEM professions at higher rates** than their white, non-LGBTQ male counterparts.
- However, both the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NAEM) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) have found that, within STEM professions, **teams consisting of individuals with diverse identities and backgrounds innovate at higher rates** than teams composed of individuals without this diversity.
- *Thus, there is an urgent need to improve opportunities to recruit and retain women and underrepresented minorities in STEM.*

Accordingly, the Women and Underrepresented Minorities in STEM Booster Act of 2025 would **authorize funding for the National Science Foundation to provide grants** to programs **focused on professional development, training, mentoring and outreach activities in STEM fields**. Examples of these activities include:

- Online workshops.
- Mentoring programs that partner STEM professionals with students.
- Internships for undergraduate and graduate students in STEM.
- Outreach programs providing elementary and secondary school students with opportunities to increase their exposure to STEM fields.
- Programs to increase recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty.

**Introduced by Senator Mazie K. Hirono (D-HI) in the Senate and Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland (D-WA-10) and Congresswoman Shontel Brown (D-OH-11).**