

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2023

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee  
on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies

Dear Chair Baldwin and Ranking Member Capito:

As you evaluate federal spending priorities for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY 2024), we encourage you to increase funding for federal programs authorized by the Higher Education Act (HEA) and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Perkins) to support Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) in the United States. Generally, these programs are directed toward institutions with substantial enrollments of students from working- and middle-class backgrounds that receive limited non-federal funding from states, endowments, and other sources. By providing grant funding to improve college access and success at these institutions, the programs contribute to a stronger, more competitive and inclusive economy, and an overall workforce that is more diverse.

Keeping these benefits in mind, we request strong funding for each of the following programs:

- **Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities Program (HEA Title III, Part B), Endowment Challenge Grants (HEA Title III, Part C), Master’s Degree Programs at HBCUs (HEA Title VII, Part A), and HBCU Capital Financing Program:** Despite persistent underinvestment in HBCUs, these institutions have continued to play a vital role in providing affordable and accessible higher education for minority students who are underrepresented. In 2021, HBCUs awarded 13 percent of all bachelor’s degrees earned by African American students and 5 percent of all master’s degrees. The continued success of HBCUs warrants a stronger federal investment in these institutions.
- **Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program (HEA Title V, Part A), Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans Program (HEA Title V, Part B), and Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM Programs (HEA Title III, Part F):** HSIs also continue to play a vital role in providing affordable and accessible higher education for underrepresented minority students. Collectively, these institutions enrolled 2.2 million students in 2021. However, despite providing services to millions of students, these programs have remained underresourced. The continued success of HSIs warrants a stronger federal investment in these institutions.

- **Strengthening Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Program (HEA Title III, Parts A and F) and Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Institutions Program (Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act):** TCUs are tribally and federally chartered institutions of higher education that offer hundreds of programs to students. Collectively, these institutions enroll roughly 30,000 students – with American Indian and Alaska Native students composing 78 percent of the combined total enrollment of these institutions. TCUs have a higher share of low-income students, a higher share of part-time students, and a slightly higher share of first-generation college students. They also tend to be located in areas that would otherwise be characterized as education deserts, given the limited access to nearby colleges and universities. TCUs provide high-risk students with an opportunity to continue their education, yet they are chronically underfunded. It should be a priority to ensure that TCUs receive the necessary resources to continue their programs.
- **Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Program (HEA Title III, Parts A and F):** ANNHSIs serve significant populations of low-income or Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian (ANNH) students, and generally have fewer educational resources compared to other institutions. Many times, ANNHSIs are the only postsecondary institution available to geographically-isolated and historically-underserved populations. Funding for these programs support institutions that serve over 57,000 students.
- **Strengthening Predominantly Black Institutions Program (Title III, Parts A and F) and Master’s Degree Programs at PBIs (HEA Title VII, Part A):** PBIs serve largely low-income, often first-generation college students. They play a critical role in providing access to increasingly diverse student bodies. In 2017, the completion rates of students enrolled in four-year PBIs were higher than the national graduation rate. With fewer educational resources compared to other institutions, PBIs play a critical role in providing access to education.
- **Strengthening Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions Program (HEA Title III, Parts A and F):** The “model minority” myth that all Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander (AANAPI) students perform well, academically and professionally, masks disparities in college access and success for certain AANAPI subgroups. Disparities for Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, and Samoan students receiving bachelor’s degrees highlight these inequities. Programs to support AANAPISIs can help to address existing disparities for low-income and AANAPI students.
- **Strengthening Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions Program (HEA Title III, Parts A and F):** NASNTIs are state institutions with limited financial resources that report significant numbers of Native American students. Competitive grants for these

institutions support a variety of targeted strategies to build capacity for improving student success.

- **Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program (HEA Title III, Part E):** MSEIP helps institutions with significant minority enrollments to improve the pathway to STEM careers for underrepresented minorities. Grants focus on reducing barriers throughout the educational pipeline.
- **First in the World, with set-asides for MSIs (HEA Title VII, Part B):** The First in the World program provides grants to support the implementation and evaluation of evidence-based strategies to dramatically improve high-need students' college completion. The program includes a set-aside for HBCUs and MSIs.
- **Innovation for Completion Fund:** This proposal supports grants to HBCUs and MSIs to provide research-based strategies to significantly improve minority student enrollment and completion.

Thank you for your consideration of these requests.

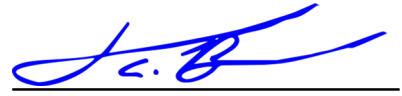
Sincerely,



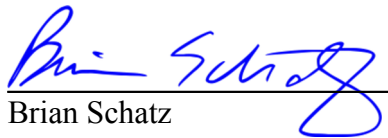
Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



Robert Menendez  
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



Tina Smith  
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator



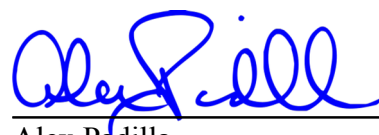
Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator



Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



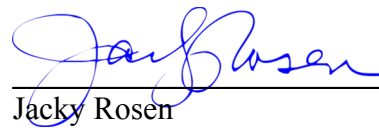
Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



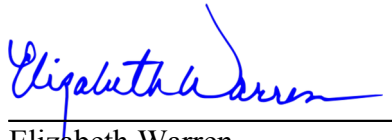
Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

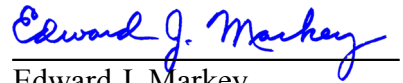


Jacky Rosen  
U.S. Senator



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Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



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Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator