

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To enable high research activity status historically Black colleges or universities to increase capacity toward achieving very high research activity status.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. TILLIS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To enable high research activity status historically Black colleges or universities to increase capacity toward achieving very high research activity status.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “HBCU Research, In-
5 novation, Security, and Excellence Act” or the “HBCU
6 RISE Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) Historically Black colleges and universities
2 hold a unique position in the efforts of the United
3 States to diversify the science, technology, engineer-
4 ing, and mathematics academic and workforce com-
5 munities.

6 (2) Even though our Nation's historically Black
7 colleges and universities make up just 3 percent of
8 the colleges and universities in the United States,
9 historically Black colleges and universities graduate
10 25 percent of African-American students with bacca-
11 laurate degrees in the fields of science, technology,
12 engineering, and mathematics.

13 (3) Historically Black colleges and universities
14 are the institution of origin for almost 30 percent of
15 Black graduates of science and engineering doc-
16 torate programs.

17 (4) The health of the Department of Defense
18 and the United States research ecosystem relies on
19 high quality researchers from a diverse talent pool.

20 (5) Historically Black colleges and universities
21 have a history of conducting high quality research in
22 unique areas, both providing impactful research out-
23 comes and developing the next generation of the re-
24 search ecosystem, such as by—

1 (A) conducting high quality research in
2 unique areas that has enriched the Department
3 of Defense research enterprise and the United
4 States research ecosystem;

5 (B) strengthening and diversifying the
6 United States research ecosystem by increasing
7 the number of students who are students of di-
8 verse backgrounds from historically Black col-
9 leges and universities with undergraduate or
10 graduate degrees in science, technology, engi-
11 neering, or mathematics; and

12 (C) fueling domestic and international col-
13 laborations that led to trailblazing discoveries
14 and innovative technologies.

15 (6) In 2019, historically Black colleges and uni-
16 versities received \$371,000,000, or about 0.8 percent
17 of the \$44,500,000,000 in Federal funding to insti-
18 tutions of higher education for research and develop-
19 ment. The amount of funding for 2019 is a marked
20 decrease from fiscal year 2018, when historically
21 Black colleges and universities received
22 \$400,000,000 in Federal research and development
23 funding (0.9 percent of the Federal funding to insti-
24 tutions of higher education for such purposes).

1 (7) There are no historically Black colleges and
2 universities designated as very high research activity
3 status, as classified by the Carnegie Classification of
4 Institutions of Higher Education.

5 (8) Meaningfully investing in the research ca-
6 pacity of historically Black colleges and universities
7 is an investment in our Nation’s future and will help
8 meet accelerating science, technology, engineering,
9 and mathematics workforce demands and safeguard
10 the national security interests of the United States.

11 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE.**

12 The purpose of the program established under this
13 Act is to provide additional pathways needed for further
14 increasing capacity at historically Black colleges and uni-
15 versities to achieve very high research activity status.

16 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

17 In this Act:

18 (1) **HIGH RESEARCH ACTIVITY STATUS.**—The
19 term “high research activity status” means such sta-
20 tus, as classified by the Carnegie Classification of
21 Institutions of Higher Education.

22 (2) **HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNI-**
23 **VERSITY.**—The term “historically Black college or
24 university” has the meaning given the term “part B

1 institution” under section 322 of the Higher Edu-
2 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061).

3 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
4 the Secretary of Defense.

5 (4) VERY HIGH RESEARCH ACTIVITY STATUS.—
6 The term “very high research activity status” means
7 such status, as classified by the Carnegie Classifica-
8 tion of Institutions of Higher Education.

9 (5) VERY HIGH RESEARCH ACTIVITY STATUS
10 INDICATORS.—The term “very high research activity
11 status indicators” means the categories used by the
12 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher
13 Education to delineate which institutions have very
14 high activity status. These include—

15 (A) annual expenditures in science and en-
16 gineering;

17 (B) per-capita (faculty member) expendi-
18 tures in science and engineering;

19 (C) annual expenditures in non-science and
20 engineering fields;

21 (D) per-capita (faculty member) expendi-
22 tures in non-science and engineering fields;

23 (E) doctorates awarded in science, tech-
24 nology, engineering, and mathematics fields;

1 (F) doctorates awarded in social science
2 fields;

3 (G) doctorates awarded in the humanities;

4 (H) doctorates awarded in other fields with
5 a research emphasis;

6 (I) total number of research staff including
7 postdoctoral researchers;

8 (J) other doctorate-holding non-faculty re-
9 searchers in science and engineering and per-
10 capita (faculty) number of doctorate-level re-
11 search staff including post-doctoral researchers;
12 and

13 (K) other categories utilized to determine
14 classification.

15 **SEC. 5. PROGRAM TO INCREASE CAPACITY TOWARD**
16 **ACHIEVING VERY HIGH RESEARCH ACTIVITY**
17 **STATUS AT HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES**
18 **OR UNIVERSITIES.**

19 (a) PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall establish and
20 carry out, using funds made available for research activi-
21 ties, a pilot program to increase capacity at high research
22 activity status (R2) historically Black colleges and univer-
23 sities toward achieving very high research activity status
24 (R1) within a decade. In establishing such a pilot pro-
25 gram, the Secretary may consider the recommendations

1 pursuant to section 262 of the National Defense Author-
2 ization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (Public Law 116–92; 10
3 U.S.C. 2362 note) and section 220 of the National De-
4 fense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (Public Law
5 117–81).

6 (b) GRANTS.—In carrying out the program, the Sec-
7 retary shall award grants for key areas of scientific re-
8 search on a competitive, merit-reviewed basis to histori-
9 cally Black colleges or universities that are classified as
10 high research activity status institutions at the time of ap-
11 plication for such a grant.

12 (c) EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary
13 may expand the program to other historically Black col-
14 leges or universities beyond those historically Black col-
15 leges or universities classified as high research activity sta-
16 tus if the Secretary determines that the program can sup-
17 port such an expansion while achieving the purpose of the
18 program, as described in section 3.

19 (d) APPLICATION.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a
21 grant under this section, a historically Black college
22 or university described in subsection (b) shall submit
23 an application to the Secretary at such time, in such
24 manner, and containing such information and assur-
25 ances as the Secretary may require.

1 (2) CONTENTS.—The application described in
2 paragraph (1) shall include, at a minimum, a de-
3 scription of—

4 (A) nascent research capabilities and re-
5 search areas of interest to the Department of
6 Defense;

7 (B) a plan for increasing the level of re-
8 search activity toward achieving very high re-
9 search activity status classification within a
10 decade of the grant award, including measur-
11 able milestones such as growth in very high re-
12 search activity status indicators and other rel-
13 evant factors;

14 (C) how the institution of higher education
15 will sustain the increased level of research activ-
16 ity beyond the duration of the award; and

17 (D) how the implementation of the pro-
18 posed plan will be evaluated and assessed.

19 (e) PROGRAM COMPONENTS.—

20 (1) STRATEGIC AREAS OF SCIENTIFIC RE-
21 SEARCH.—In consultation with the Defense Science
22 Board, the Secretary, or the Secretary's designee,
23 shall establish annually a list of key areas of re-
24 search for which applicants can seek funding.

1 (2) USE OF FUNDS.—An institution that re-
2 ceives a grant under this section shall use the grant
3 funds to support research activities, including—

4 (A) faculty professional development;

5 (B) stipends for undergraduate and grad-
6 uate students and post-doctoral scholars;

7 (C) laboratory equipment and instrumenta-
8 tion;

9 (D) recruitment and retention of faculty
10 and graduate students;

11 (E) communication and dissemination of
12 products produced during the funding period;

13 (F) construction, modernization, rehabilita-
14 tion, or retrofitting of facilities for research
15 purposes; and

16 (G) other activities necessary to build ca-
17 pacity in research activity indicator areas.

18 (3) RESEARCH ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary,
19 in partnership with the institution, shall provide cri-
20 teria for assessing and evaluating progress related to
21 the very high research activity indicators.

22 (4) RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORTING.—An in-
23 stitution that receives a grant under this section
24 shall submit to the Secretary a progress report and
25 an updated plan described in subsection (d)(2)(B)

1 not less than once every 3 years, which shall be
2 based on a self-assessment of progress in advancing
3 in very high research activity indicators.

4 (5) TRANSITION ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary
5 may consider creating pathways for new historically
6 Black colleges or universities to enter into the pro-
7 gram under this section as participating institutions
8 achieve very high research activity status.

9 (f) EVALUATION.—Not later than 5 years after the
10 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall pre-
11 pare and submit a report to the Committee on Armed
12 Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Serv-
13 ices of the House of Representatives providing an update
14 on the pilot program, including—

15 (1) activities carried out under the pilot pro-
16 gram;

17 (2) an analysis of the growth in very high re-
18 search activity status indicators of participating in-
19 stitutions; and

20 (3) emerging research areas of interest to the
21 Department of Defense conducted by participating
22 institutions.

23 (g) TERMINATION.—The pilot program established
24 under this section shall terminate 10 years after the date
25 on which the Secretary establishes such program.

1 (h) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days
2 after the termination of the pilot program, the Secretary
3 shall prepare and submit a report to the Committee on
4 Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on
5 Armed Services of the House of Representatives on the
6 pilot program. Such report shall include the following ele-
7 ments:

8 (1) An analysis of the growth in very high re-
9 search activity status indicators of participating in-
10 stitutions.

11 (2) An evaluation on the effectiveness of the
12 program in bolstering the research capacity of par-
13 ticipating institutions.

14 (3) An assessment on how institutions that
15 have achieved very high research activity status plan
16 to sustain that status beyond the duration of the
17 program.

18 (4) An evaluation of the effectiveness of the
19 program to increase diversity of students conducting
20 high quality research in unique areas.

21 (5) Recommendations on further activities and
22 investments necessary to elevate the research status
23 of historically Black colleges and universities.

24 (6) Recommendations on renewal or expansion
25 of the program established under this section.