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
4 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
5 This Act may be cited as the “HBCU Research, In-
6 novation, Security, and Excellence Act” or the “HBCU
7 RISE Act”.
8
9 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.
10 Congress finds the following:
(1) Historically Black colleges and universities hold a unique position in the efforts of the United States to diversify the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics academic and workforce communities.

(2) Even though our Nation’s historically Black colleges and universities make up just 3 percent of the colleges and universities in the United States, historically Black colleges and universities graduate 25 percent of African-American students with baccalaureate degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

(3) Historically Black colleges and universities are the institution of origin for almost 30 percent of Black graduates of science and engineering doctorate programs.

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

(5) Historically Black colleges and universities have a history of conducting high quality research in unique areas, both providing impactful research outcomes and developing the next generation of the research ecosystem, such as by—
(A) conducting high quality research in unique areas that has enriched the Department of Defense research enterprise and the United States research ecosystem;

(B) strengthening and diversifying the United States research ecosystem by increasing the number of students who are students of diverse backgrounds from historically Black colleges and universities with undergraduate or graduate degrees in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics; and

(C) fueling domestic and international collaborations that led to trailblazing discoveries and innovative technologies.

(6) In 2019, historically Black colleges and universities received $371,000,000, or about 0.8 percent of the $44,500,000,000 in Federal funding to institutions of higher education for research and development. The amount of funding for 2019 is a marked decrease from fiscal year 2018, when historically Black colleges and universities received $400,000,000 in Federal research and development funding (0.9 percent of the Federal funding to institutions of higher education for such purposes).
(7) There are no historically Black colleges and universities designated as very high research activity status, as classified by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

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

SEC. 3. PURPOSE.

The purpose of the program established under this Act is to provide additional pathways needed for further increasing capacity at historically Black colleges and universities to achieve very high research activity status.

SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) High research activity status.—The term “high research activity status” means such status, as classified by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

(2) Historically Black college or university.—The term “historically Black college or university” has the meaning given the term “part B

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

(4) Very high research activity status.—The term “very high research activity status” means such status, as classified by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

(5) Very high research activity status indicators.—The term “very high research activity status indicators” means the categories used by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education to delineate which institutions have very high activity status. These include—

(A) annual expenditures in science and engineering;

(B) per-capita (faculty member) expenditures in science and engineering;

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

(D) per-capita (faculty member) expenditures in non-science and engineering fields;

(E) doctorates awarded in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields;
(F) doctorates awarded in social science fields;

(G) doctorates awarded in the humanities;

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

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

(J) other doctorate-holding non-faculty researchers in science and engineering and per-capita (faculty) number of doctorate-level research staff including post-doctoral researchers; and

(K) other categories utilized to determine classification.

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

(a) PROGRAM.—The Secretary shall establish and carry out, using funds made available for research activities, a pilot program to increase capacity at high research activity status (R2) historically Black colleges and universities toward achieving very high research activity status (R1) within a decade. In establishing such a pilot program, the Secretary may consider the recommendations

(b) GRANTS.—In carrying out the program, the Secretary shall award grants for key areas of scientific research on a competitive, merit-reviewed basis to historically Black colleges or universities that are classified as high research activity status institutions at the time of application for such a grant.

(c) EXPANSION OF ELIGIBILITY.—The Secretary may expand the program to other historically Black colleges or universities beyond those historically Black colleges or universities classified as high research activity status if the Secretary determines that the program can support such an expansion while achieving the purpose of the program, as described in section 3.

(d) APPLICATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a historically Black college or university described in subsection (b) shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information and assurances as the Secretary may require.
(2) CONTENTS.—The application described in paragraph (1) shall include, at a minimum, a description of—

(A) nascent research capabilities and research areas of interest to the Department of Defense;

(B) a plan for increasing the level of research activity toward achieving very high research activity status classification within a decade of the grant award, including measurable milestones such as growth in very high research activity status indicators and other relevant factors;

(C) how the institution of higher education will sustain the increased level of research activity beyond the duration of the award; and

(D) how the implementation of the proposed plan will be evaluated and assessed.

(e) PROGRAM COMPONENTS.—

(1) STRATEGIC AREAS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.—In consultation with the Defense Science Board, the Secretary, or the Secretary’s designee, shall establish annually a list of key areas of research for which applicants can seek funding.
(2) USE OF FUNDS.—An institution that receives a grant under this section shall use the grant funds to support research activities, including—

(A) faculty professional development;

(B) stipends for undergraduate and graduate students and post-doctoral scholars;

(C) laboratory equipment and instrumentation;

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

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

(F) construction, modernization, rehabilitation, or retrofitting of facilities for research purposes; and

(G) other activities necessary to build capacity in research activity indicator areas.

(3) RESEARCH ASSESSMENT.—The Secretary, in partnership with the institution, shall provide criteria for assessing and evaluating progress related to the very high research activity indicators.

(4) RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORTING.—An institution that receives a grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary a progress report and an updated plan described in subsection (d)(2)(B)
not less than once every 3 years, which shall be based on a self-assessment of progress in advancing in very high research activity indicators.

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

(f) EVALUATION.—Not later than 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall prepare and submit a report to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives providing an update on the pilot program, including—

(1) activities carried out under the pilot program;

(2) an analysis of the growth in very high research activity status indicators of participating institutions; and

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

(g) TERMINATION.—The pilot program established under this section shall terminate 10 years after the date on which the Secretary establishes such program.
(h) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the termination of the pilot program, the Secretary shall prepare and submit a report to the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate and the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives on the pilot program. Such report shall include the following elements:

(1) An analysis of the growth in very high research activity status indicators of participating institutions.

(2) An evaluation on the effectiveness of the program in bolstering the research capacity of participating institutions.

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

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

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

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