

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 10043

To provide grants to Historically Black colleges and universities for such colleges and universities to provide scholarships to students who are descended from a person who was enslaved in the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 3, 2026

Ms. WILSON of Florida introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To provide grants to Historically Black colleges and universities for such colleges and universities to provide scholarships to students who are descended from a person who was enslaved in the United States, and for other purposes.

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 “Heritage Legacy Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. GRANTS FOR HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES OR**
2 **UNIVERSITIES.**

3 (a) GRANT AUTHORITY.—For fiscal year 2027 and
4 each succeeding fiscal year, the Secretary of Education
5 shall award grants to each Historically Black College or
6 University (in this Act referred to as an “HBCU”) in an
7 amount that equals the sum of the annual tuition charged
8 to all qualified students enrolled at such HBCU for the
9 academic year that begins July 1 of such fiscal year.

10 (b) USES OF FUNDS.—

11 (1) USES OF FUNDS.—An HBCU receiving a
12 grant under this Act shall provide a direct scholar-
13 ship to each qualified student—

14 (A) for each academic year that such stu-
15 dent is enrolled at the HBCU, which may not
16 exceed 12 semesters or the equivalent; and

17 (B) in an amount which does not exceed
18 an amount equal to the sum of the tuition for
19 the program of study for such year in which
20 such qualified student is enrolled.

21 (2) DIRECT SCHOLARSHIPS.—In providing di-
22 rect scholarships under paragraph (1)(A), the
23 HBCU shall make payments to qualified students in
24 the same manner, using the same payment periods,
25 as such HBCU makes payments for Federal Pell

1 Grants under section 401 of the Higher Education
2 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a).

3 (c) DESCENDENT OF AN INDIVIDUAL WHO WAS
4 ENSLAVED IN THE UNITED STATES.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Prior to awarding a grant
6 under this Act to an HBCU, the Secretary shall de-
7 termine the number of qualified students at such
8 HBCU.

9 (2) VERIFICATION.—To verify that an indi-
10 vidual is a qualified student, such individual shall
11 provide to the Secretary, or, if determined appro-
12 priate by the Secretary, to the HBCU that the indi-
13 vidual is attending, the documentation described in
14 paragraph (3) demonstrating that at least one-quar-
15 ter of the genes of such individual are attributable
16 to an individual who was enslaved in the United
17 States.

18 (3) DOCUMENTATION.—For purposes of the
19 verification required under this subsection, an indi-
20 vidual shall provide to the Secretary—

21 (A) documentation that verifies that the
22 ancestors of such individual were listed, in any
23 United States census before October 3, 1965,
24 as—

25 (i) African American;

- 1 (ii) Afro-American;
- 2 (iii) Black;
- 3 (iv) Black (Negroid);
- 4 (v) Black (Negro or Negro descent);
- 5 (vi) Colored;
- 6 (vii) Free Colored;
- 7 (viii) Freedman;
- 8 (ix) Mullato;
- 9 (x) Negro;
- 10 (xi) Negro of African Descent;
- 11 (xii) Negro of the African Race;
- 12 (xiii) Octoroon;
- 13 (xiv) Quadroon;
- 14 (xv) Slave; or
- 15 (xvi) any other classification used by
- 16 the United States Census Bureau or a
- 17 State for an individual of the African dias-
- 18 pora; or
- 19 (B) any other form of proof as the Sec-
- 20 retary may authorize for an individual to verify
- 21 that such individual is a descendent of an indi-
- 22 vidual who was enslaved in the United States.
- 23 (4) PREFERENCE.—An HBCU receiving a
- 24 grant under this Act may indicate to the Secretary

1 whether such HBCU prefers to perform the
2 verification required under this subsection.

3 (d) FUNDING.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
5 appropriated, and there are appropriated (in addi-
6 tion to any other amounts appropriated to carry out
7 this Act and out of any money in the Treasury not
8 otherwise appropriated), for the Secretary of Edu-
9 cation to carry out this Act.

10 (2) RESERVATION.—Of the funds appropriated
11 under paragraph (1) for a fiscal year, the Secretary
12 shall reserve 5 percent of such funds to—

13 (A) carry out the requirements under sub-
14 section (c) for each HBCU receiving a grant
15 under this Act, other than an HBCU described
16 in subparagraph (B);

17 (B) in the case of an HBCU that is per-
18 forming the verification under subsection (c) for
19 the students attending such HBCU, provide an
20 amount from such funds to the HBCU to per-
21 form such verification; and

22 (C) provide grants to each HBCU for ad-
23 ministrative costs of carrying out the activities
24 described in subsection (b).

25 (e) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this Act:

1 (1) HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNI-
 2 VERSITY.—The term “Historically Black college or
 3 university” has the meaning given the term “part B
 4 institution” in section 322 of the Higher Education
 5 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061).

6 (2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
 7 term “institution of higher education” has the
 8 meaning given the term section 101 of the Higher
 9 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

10 (3) QUALIFIED STUDENT.—The term “qualified
 11 student” means any undergraduate student that—

12 (A) is enrolled, on a full-time basis, at a
 13 Historically Black college or university; and

14 (B) has been determined under subsection
 15 (c) to be a descendent of an individual who was
 16 enslaved in the United States.

17 **SEC. 3. HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965 AMENDMENT.**

18 Part F of title IV of the Higher Education Act of
 19 1965 is amended by inserting after section 479C (20
 20 U.S.C. 1087uu–1) the following:

21 **“SEC. 479CC. STUDENTS WHO ARE DESCENDENTS OF**
 22 **ENSLAVED INDIVIDUALS.**

23 “(a) STUDENT AID INDEX COMPUTATION.—In deter-
 24 mining the student aid index for a qualified student, com-
 25 putations performed pursuant to part F of this Act shall

1 exclude any scholarship awarded to a qualified student
2 under the Heritage Legacy Act.

3 “(b) QUALIFIED STUDENT DEFINED.—The term
4 ‘qualified student’ has the meaning given such term in sec-
5 tion 2 of the Heritage Legacy Act.”.

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