

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 4167

To establish the Federal Clearinghouse on Grant Opportunities for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 24, 2026

Mr. WARNOCK (for himself and Mrs. BRITT) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To establish the Federal Clearinghouse on Grant Opportunities for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 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 “HBCU Research Ca-
5 pacity Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) Historically Black Colleges and Universities
9 (HBCUs) are a vital source to the Nation’s research

1 and workforce communities. While enrolling 8.5 per-
2 cent of Black undergraduate students, HBCUs
3 produce almost 18 percent of Black STEM bach-
4 elor's degree recipients, as of 2024.

5 (2) Despite these major contributions, only one
6 HBCU, Howard University, has achieved very high
7 research activity status. Furthermore, HBCUs re-
8 ceived less than 1 percent of the approximately
9 \$60,000,000,000 in Federal research and develop-
10 ment expenditures at colleges and universities in fis-
11 cal year 2023.

12 (3) Due to historical underfunding, HBCUs
13 face cyclical barriers in building research capacity,
14 further limiting grant access, resources, and exas-
15 perating issues related to smaller endowments. This
16 makes it even more difficult for scholars to secure
17 Federal research funding.

18 (4) In finding solutions to research and devel-
19 opment barriers, a May 2024 report by the National
20 Science and Technology Council recommends strate-
21 gies such as expanding flexibility in funding, encour-
22 aging interagency collaboration to share best prac-
23 tices, and reforming merit-review to reduce bias and
24 improve transparency.

1 (5) Expanding research diversity is strategically
 2 important for national security, economic growth,
 3 and innovation. Underrepresentation of HBCUs in
 4 Federal research funding represents a missed oppor-
 5 tunity.

6 (6) A Federal clearinghouse providing informa-
 7 tion on grant opportunities and sharing best prac-
 8 tices would help address barriers such as knowledge
 9 gaps, transparency, and capacity limitations.

10 (7) Coordinated agency review, gap identifica-
 11 tion, and reporting to Congress should improve ac-
 12 countability and help ensure equitable access to Fed-
 13 eral research funding for HBCUs.

14 (8) Establishing, maintaining, and creating ac-
 15 countability measures for the Clearinghouse is there-
 16 fore appropriate and necessary to notify eligible
 17 HBCUs and guide Federal agencies in supporting
 18 HBCU research capacity.

19 **SEC. 3. FEDERAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON GRANT OPPORTUNI-**
 20 **TIES FOR HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES**
 21 **AND UNIVERSITIES.**

22 Part B of title III of the Higher Education Act of
 23 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1060 et seq.) is amended by adding at
 24 the end the following:

1 **“SEC. 328. FEDERAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON GRANT OPPOR-**
2 **TUNITIES FOR HISTORICALLY BLACK COL-**
3 **LEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.**

4 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in coordina-
6 tion with the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary
7 of Energy, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary
8 of Agriculture, the Director of the National Science
9 Foundation, the Administrator of the Environmental
10 Protection Agency, and the Administrator of the Na-
11 tional Aeronautics and Space Administration shall
12 establish a Federal Clearinghouse on Research Ca-
13 pacity and Grant Opportunities for Historically
14 Black Colleges and Universities (in this section re-
15 ferred to as the ‘Clearinghouse’) within the Depart-
16 ment.

17 “(2) PURPOSE.—The Clearinghouse shall be
18 the primary resource of the Federal Government to
19 identify and provide comprehensive information on
20 Federal grant opportunities for which part B institu-
21 tions are eligible or are exclusively eligible, delin-
22 eating between the two categories, that support—

23 “(A) research and development; and

24 “(B) building institutional research capac-
25 ity.

26 “(3) PERSONNEL.—

1 “(A) ASSIGNMENTS.—The Clearinghouse
2 shall be assigned such personnel and resources
3 as the Secretary considers appropriate to carry
4 out this section.

5 “(B) DETAILEES.—The Secretary of Edu-
6 cation, the Secretary of Commerce, the Sec-
7 retary of Energy, the Secretary of Defense, the
8 Secretary of Agriculture, the Director of the
9 National Science Foundation, the Administrator
10 of the Environmental Protection Agency, and
11 the Administrator of the National Aeronautics
12 and Space Administration may detail personnel
13 to the Clearinghouse.

14 “(4) EXEMPTIONS.—

15 “(A) PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT.—Sub-
16 chapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United
17 States Code (commonly known as the ‘Paper-
18 work Reduction Act’) shall not apply to any
19 rulemaking or information collection required
20 under this section.

21 “(B) FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
22 ACT.—Chapter 10 of title 5, United States
23 Code, shall not apply for the purposes of car-
24 rying out this section.

1 “(b) CLEARINGHOUSE CONTENTS.—The Clearing-
 2 house shall include best practices and recommendations
 3 for part B institutions to build institutional research ca-
 4 pacity and access Federal research funding, including best
 5 practices and recommendations from appropriate Federal,
 6 State, and local organizations, including from annual
 7 Agency Plan submissions described under section 4 of the
 8 HBCU PARTNERS Act (20 U.S.C. 1063d).”.

9 **SEC. 4. NOTIFICATION OF CLEARINGHOUSE.**

10 (a) NOTIFICATION OF PUBLICATION.—The Secretary
 11 of Education shall provide written notification of the pub-
 12 lication of the Federal Clearinghouse on Grant Opportuni-
 13 ties for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (re-
 14 ferred to in this section and section 5 as the “Clearing-
 15 house”), as required to be established under section 328
 16 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as added by section
 17 3 of this Act, to each part B institution (as such term
 18 is defined in section 322 of the Higher Education Act of
 19 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061)) and to Congress.

20 (b) ANNUAL NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS.—The
 21 Secretary of Education shall provide an annual report to
 22 Congress on the contents of the Clearinghouse.

23 (c) UPDATES.—The Secretary of Education shall—

1 (1) provide each part B institution described in
2 subsection (a) with the option to receive quarterly
3 updates of Clearinghouse contents; and

4 (2) send quarterly updates of Clearinghouse
5 contents to each part B institution that chooses to
6 receive the updates.

7 **SEC. 5. GRANT PROGRAM REVIEW.**

8 The Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Com-
9 merce, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Defense,
10 the Secretary of Agriculture, the Director of the National
11 Science Foundation, the Administrator of the Environ-
12 mental Protection Agency, and the Administrator of the
13 National Aeronautics and Space Administration shall
14 each—

15 (1) review grant programs administered by
16 their respective agency and identify any grant pro-
17 gram that may be used to implement best practices
18 and recommendations of the Clearinghouse;

19 (2) identify any best practices and rec-
20 ommendations of the Clearinghouse for which there
21 is not a Federal grant program that may be used for
22 the purposes of implementing the best practice or
23 recommendation as applicable to the agency; and

1 (3) on an annual basis, report any findings
2 under paragraph (2) to the appropriate committees
3 of Congress.

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