

【(1) \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2006, 2007, and 2008.

【(2) Such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2009.】

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Commerce to carry out this Act \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009.

SEC. 8. SUNSET.

This Act is repealed effective October 1, 2009.

Mr. MCCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent the committee amendments be agreed to, the bill, as amended, be read a third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The committee amendments were agreed to.

The bill (S. 268) was read the third time and passed.

MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTION DIGITAL AND WIRELESS TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2005

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 143, S. 432.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 432) to establish a digital and wireless network technology program, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, today I rise to respectfully urge my colleagues to support S. 432, the Minority Serving Institution Digital & Wireless Technology Opportunity Act of 2003. This legislation will provide vital resources to address the technology gap that exists at many minority serving institutions, MSIs. It establishes a new grant program within the National Science Foundation, NSF, that provides annually for 5 years up to \$250 million to help historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic serving institutions, and tribal colleges to close what I often referred to as the “digital divide”, but is more like an “economic opportunity divide.”

Since before I was elected to the Senate, my goal has always been to look for ways to improve education and empower all of our young people—regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion or economic background—to compete and succeed in life.

Additionally, I have always been one who embraces innovations and advances in technology—especially as a means to provide greater opportunities or security for Americans.

In my view, increasing access to technology provides our young people with an important tool for success both in the classroom and in the workforce.

We all know, the best jobs in the future will go to those who are the best prepared. However, I am increasingly concerned that when it comes to high technology jobs—which pay higher

wages—this country runs the risk of economically limiting many college students in our society. It is important for all Americans that we close this economic opportunity gap.

This Nation’s economic stability and growth are increasingly dependent on a growing portion of the workforce possessing technological skills.

African Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans constitute one-quarter of the total U.S. workforce. Approximately one-third of all students of color in this Nation are educated at minority serving institutions. It is estimated that in 10 years minorities will comprise nearly 40 percent of all college-age Americans.

Yet, members of these minorities represent only 7 percent of the U.S. computer and information science workforce; 6 percent of the engineering workforce; and less than 2 percent of the computer science faculty.

U.S. information technology companies are increasingly relying on foreign workers to fill important IT positions. I am not against legal immigration, but I say let’s properly educate and train Americans to get and fill those good-paying technology jobs. Let’s make sure all American students are prepared to meet the requirements on the 21st century workforce.

However, minority serving institutions still lack desired information and digital technology infrastructure. A study completed by the Department of Commerce and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education indicated that:

No historically black college or university, HBCUs, requires computer ownership for their undergraduate students;

Thirteen HBCUs reported to have no students—not one—owning their own personal computer;

Over 70 percent of the students at HBCUs rely on the universities to provide computers, however only 50 percent of those universities can provide their students access to computers in computer laboratories, libraries, classrooms or other locations; and

Most of these minority serving colleges do not have the private foundation resources to provide financial support to upgrade their network infrastructure.

So it is not surprising that most HBCUs do not have high-speed Internet access especially the desired ATM or asynchronous transfer mode technology and that only 3 percent of HBCUs have financial aid available to help students close the computer ownership gap.

Access to the Internet is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity. Because of the rapid advancement and growing dependence on technology, being technologically proficient has become more essential to educational advancement.

The fact is 60 percent of all jobs require information technology skills. And jobs in information technology pay significantly higher salaries than

jobs in non-information technology fields. Thus, students who lack access to these information technology tools are at an increasing disadvantage. Consequently, it is vitally important that all institutions of higher education provide their students with access to the most current IT and digital equipment.

This technology program will allow eligible HBCUs, HSIs and tribal institutions the opportunity to acquire equipment, networking capability, hardware and software, digital network technology and wireless technology and infrastructure—such as wireless fidelity or Wi-Fi—to develop and provide educational services. Additionally, the funds in this bill could be used to offer students much needed universal access to campus networks, dramatically increasing their connectivity rates or make necessary infrastructure improvements.

There are over 200 Hispanic serving institutions; over 100 historically black colleges and universities and 34 tribal colleges throughout our country.

It is clear that minority serving institutions in the U.S. are providing a valuable service to the educational strength and future growth of our Nation. These institutions must upgrade their technology capabilities for their students. We cannot leave any college student behind!

I am proud to say Virginia is home to five HBCUs—Norfolk State University, St. Paul’s College, Virginia Union University, Hampton University and Virginia State University.

I will continue to look for ways to: (1) improve education; (2) create new jobs; and (3) seek out new opportunities to benefit the people of Virginia and America. By improving technology-education programs in minority serving institutions, we can accomplish all three of these goals for students throughout our Nation.

We all recognize the technology requirements on the 21st century workforce call for tangible action, not rhetoric. Our future economic and national security needs depend on and demand all of our young students have the highly technical skills needed to compete and succeed in the workforce.

We must tap the underutilized talent of our minority serving institutions to ensure that America’s workforce is prepared to lead the world.

I thank my colleagues for joining me today: Senators MCCAIN, WARNER, BURNS, GRAHAM, HUTCHISON, LINCOLN, PRYOR, TALENT, CORNYN, GRASSLEY, LAUTENBERG, LOTT, MURKOWSKI, SANTORUM, and THUNE.

This legislation is a significant, constructive, and positive action to ensure that many more of our college students are provided access to better technology and education, and most importantly, even greater opportunities in life.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the

table, and any statements related to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 432) was read the third time and passed, as follows:

S. 432

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act of 2005".

SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—There is established within the National Science Foundation an Office of Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology to carry out the provisions of this Act.

(b) PURPOSE.—The Office shall—

(1) strengthen the ability of eligible institutions to provide capacity for instruction in digital and wireless network technologies by providing grants to, or executing contracts or cooperative agreements with, those institutions to provide such instruction; and

(2) strengthen the national digital and wireless infrastructure by increasing national investment in telecommunications and technology infrastructure at eligible institutions.

SEC. 3. ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED.

An eligible institution shall use a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement awarded under this Act—

(1) to acquire equipment, instrumentation, networking capability, hardware and software, digital network technology, wireless technology, and infrastructure;

(2) to develop and provide educational services, including faculty development, related to science, mathematics, engineering, or technology;

(3) to provide teacher education, library and media specialist training, and preschool and teacher aid certification to individuals who seek to acquire or enhance technology skills in order to use technology in the classroom or instructional process;

(4) to implement joint projects and consortia to provide education regarding technology in the classroom with a State or State education agency, local education agency, community-based organization, national non-profit organization, or business, including minority businesses;

(5) to provide professional development in science, mathematics, engineering, or technology to administrators and faculty of eligible institutions with institutional responsibility for technology education;

(6) to provide capacity-building technical assistance to eligible institutions through remote technical support, technical assistance workshops, distance learning, new technologies, and other technological applications;

(7) to foster the use of information communications technology to increase scientific, mathematical, engineering, and technology instruction and research; and

(8) to develop proposals to be submitted under this Act and to develop strategic plans for information technology investments.

SEC. 4. APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCEDURE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—To be eligible to receive a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this Act, an eligible institution shall submit an application to the Director at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Director may reasonably require. The Director, in consultation with the advisory council established under subsection (b), shall establish a

procedure by which to accept and review such applications and publish an announcement of such procedure, including a statement regarding the availability of funds, in the Federal Register.

(b) ADVISORY COUNCIL.—The Director shall establish an advisory council to advise the Director on the best approaches for involving eligible institutions in the activities described in section 3, and for reviewing and evaluating proposals submitted to the program. In selecting the members of the advisory council, the Director may consult with representatives of appropriate organizations, including representatives of eligible institutions, to ensure that the membership of the advisory council reflects participation by technology and telecommunications institutions, minority businesses, eligible institution communities, Federal agency personnel, and other individuals who are knowledgeable about eligible institutions and technology issues. Any panel assembled to review a proposal submitted to the program shall include members from minority serving institutions. Program review criteria shall include consideration of—

(1) demonstrated need for assistance under this Act; and

(2) diversity among the types of institutions receiving assistance under this Act.

(c) DATA COLLECTION.—An eligible institution that receives a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under section 2 shall provide the Office with any relevant institutional statistical or demographic data requested by the Office.

(d) INFORMATION DISSEMINATION.—The Director shall convene an annual meeting of eligible institutions receiving grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements under section 2 for the purposes of—

(1) fostering collaboration and capacity-building activities among eligible institutions; and

(2) disseminating information and ideas generated by such meetings.

SEC. 5. MATCHING REQUIREMENT.

The Director may not award a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement to an eligible institution under this Act unless such institution agrees that, with respect to the costs to be incurred by the institution in carrying out the program for which the grant, contract, or cooperative agreement was awarded, such institution will make available (directly or through donations from public or private entities) non-Federal contributions in an amount equal to 25 percent of the amount of the grant, contract, or cooperative agreement awarded by the Director, or \$500,000, whichever is the lesser amount. The Director shall waive the matching requirement for any institution or consortium with no endowment, or an endowment that has a current dollar value lower than \$50,000,000.

SEC. 6. LIMITATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An eligible institution that receives a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this Act that exceeds \$2,500,000, shall not be eligible to receive another grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this Act until every other eligible institution that has applied for a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this Act has received such a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement.

(b) AWARDS ADMINISTERED BY ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—Each grant, contract, or cooperative agreement awarded under this Act shall be made to, and administered by, an eligible institution, even when it is awarded for the implementation of a consortium or joint project.

SEC. 7. ANNUAL REPORT AND EVALUATION.

(a) ANNUAL REPORT REQUIRED FROM RECIPIENTS.—Each institution that receives a

grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this Act shall provide an annual report to the Director on its use of the grant, contract, or cooperative agreement.

(b) EVALUATION BY DIRECTOR.—The Director, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, shall—

(1) review the reports provided under subsection (a) each year; and

(2) evaluate the program authorized by section 3 on the basis of those reports every 2 years.

(c) CONTENTS OF EVALUATION.—The Director, in the evaluation, shall describe the activities undertaken by those institutions and shall assess the short-range and long-range impact of activities carried out under the grant, contract, or cooperative agreement on the students, faculty, and staff of the institutions.

(d) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Director shall submit a report to the Congress based on the evaluation. In the report, the Director shall include such recommendations, including recommendations concerning the continuing need for Federal support of the program, as may be appropriate.

SEC. 8. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term "eligible institution" means an institution that is—

(A) a historically Black college or university that is a part B institution, as defined in section 322(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061(2));

(B) a Hispanic-serving institution, as defined in section 502(a)(5) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(5));

(C) a tribally controlled college or university, as defined in section 316(b)(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)(3));

(D) an Alaska Native-serving institution under section 317(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059d(b));

(E) a Native Hawaiian-serving institution under section 317(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059d(b)); or

(F) an institution determined by the Director, in consultation with the Secretary of Education, to have enrolled a substantial number of minority, low-income students during the previous academic year who received assistance under subpart I of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a et seq.) for that year.

(2) DIRECTOR.—The term "Director" means the Director of the National Science Foundation.

(3) MINORITY BUSINESS.—The term "minority business" includes HUBZone small business concerns (as defined in section 3(p) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 632(p))).

SEC. 9. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Director of the National Science Foundation \$250,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2006 through 2010 to carry out this Act.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order of April 7, 2005, with respect to S. 295 be amended so that the Senate proceed to S. 295 no later than the end of the first session of the 109th Congress, with all other provisions of the agreement remaining constant.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. To reiterate the comments of April 7, the proponents of this legislation have agreed they will