

TITLE VIII—PARTNERSHIP GRANTS**SECTION 801. COLLEGE ACCESS CHALLENGE GRANTS**

The House bill (Sec. 411) establishes “College Access Challenge Grants,” which leverage federal funds to increase the number of students from underserved populations who enter and complete college through matching grants to philanthropic organizations. The federal government will provide a 2 to 1 match for private and other public funds for these purposes. The philanthropic organizations will work with states, institutions of higher education, and local education agencies and other organizations to raise funds and provide outreach and student support programs.

The Senate amendment (Sec. 801) establishes a College Access Partnership Grant program, to make payments to States to assist them in carrying out specified activities to increase college access for low-income students in the state. The federal share of the matching grant is $\frac{2}{3}$ and the state share is $\frac{1}{3}$. Activities may be carried out under this grant by state agencies or not-for-profit organizations that the state designates, including not-for-profit lenders, and must be made available to all qualifying students in the state, with priority given to students and families living below the poverty line. The amendment provides that authority to carry out this section shall expire on September 30, 2009.

The House recedes with an amendment changing the name of the program to “College Access Challenge Grants” and incorporating a House provision allowing philanthropic organizations to apply to the Secretary for a grant in the case where a state does not meet the matching requirements or chooses not to apply for a grant. The Conferees adopt the Senate amendment as amended by the House.

The Conferees intend that states, entities, or organizations providing activities under the College Access Challenge Grants program created by this Act coordinate such activities with existing state partnership programs designed to increase college access, particularly the state’s Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership program (LEAP) under title IV, Part A, Subpart 4, if a state has such a program.

SECTION 802. INVESTMENT IN HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES AND MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS

The House bill (Sec. 401) provides a total \$500 million over the next five years to the following designated institutions with the following amounts:

\$200 million to Hispanic-Serving Institutions to be distributed to the institutions in the same competitive manner as is done under title V of the Higher Education Act, and for uses under title V with priority to those applications that will increase the number of low-income students attaining degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, or math and to applications that develop model transfer articulation agreements.

\$170 million to Historically Black Colleges and Universities to be distributed for use through some of the activities described in section 323(a) of the Higher Education Act including the purchase of laboratory equipment, the funding of instruction, the purchase of materials, and the establishment or enhancement of a teacher education program. Additionally, funds may be used in a manner consistent with the institution’s comprehensive plan and designed to increase the institution’s capacity to prepare students for careers in the physical and natural sciences, math, computer science, information technology, engineering, language instruction and other specified areas.

\$30 million to Predominately Black Institutions to award 50 grants of \$600,000 for programs in the fields of science, technology, engineering, health education, teacher education, or programs that improve the educational outcomes of African American males.

\$60 million to Tribal Colleges and Universities to be distributed in the manner that the funds are used under current law in section 316 of the Higher Education Act including the purchase of laboratory equipment, the funding of instruction, the purchase of materials, or the establishment or enhancement of teacher education and outreach programs.

\$30 million to Alaska/Hawaiian Native Institutions to be distributed in the manner that the funds are used under current law in section 317 of the Higher Education Act including the purchase of laboratory equipment, the funding of instruction, the purchase of materials, and the creation of academic tutoring programs.

\$10 million to Asian American and Pacific Islander Institutions to be distributed to institutions as defined in this section, and used in a manner that may include the purchase of laboratory equipment, the funding of instruction, the purchase of materials, and the creation of tutoring programs.

The House bill defines the following for the purposes of distributing funds:

Predominately Black Institutions as institutions that have an enrollment of financially needy undergraduate students; an enrollment of undergraduate students at least 40% of whom are Black; and, that has at least 1,000 undergraduate students of whom not less than 50% enrolled at the institution are low-income or first generation and registered in a BA or AA program leading to a degree.

Asian and Pacific Islander-serving institution as institutions that have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10% Asian American and Pacific Islander and has a significant enrollment of financially needy students.

The Senate amendment contains no similar provision.

The Senate recedes with an amendment that \$255 million shall be authorized in each of 2008 and 2009, for a total investment of \$510 million. The amendment adds \$10 million for Native American Serving, Nontribal Institutions to be distributed to institutions as defined in this section, and used in a manner that may include the purchase of laboratory equipment, the funding of instruction, the purchase of materials, and the creation of tutoring programs. The Conferees agree to the House bill as amended by the Senate.

The amendment defines Native American Serving, Nontribal Institutions for the purposes of distributing funds at institutions that have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10% Native American and is not a Tribal College or University.

These institutions, which serve groups who were historically denied access to postsecondary education because of discrimination, have an important role in higher education. They help to preserve cultural traditions and to ensure a diverse pool of qualified professionals in the nation’s economy. At the same time, they offer affordable, high quality college education to thousands of students as well as provide much needed job training. These institutions also provide crucial support services and add hope to communities that have high rates of poverty and unemployment. Today, a high quality education greatly depends on the technology and resources available to students. The Conferees recognize that HBCUs, HSIs, and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) do not

have sufficient financial ability to provide these opportunities and satisfy the unique needs of these schools without Federal assistance.

MSIs have an important role in providing equal educational opportunities to qualified minority students. According to the Institute for Higher Education Policy, approximately 2.3 million students, or about one-third of all African Americans, American Indians/Alaska Natives, and Hispanics in all higher education institutions in the United States and Puerto Rico, were enrolled at HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, Alaska and Hawaiian Native institutions. These numbers have grown rapidly in recent years—in fact, enrollment at these institutions accelerated by 66 percent from 1995 to 2003, compared to only 20 percent at all postsecondary institutions.

The importance of these unique institutions is underscored by the fact that they provide postsecondary educational opportunities specifically tailored to students who traditionally have been denied access to adequately funded elementary and secondary schools, especially low-income, educationally disadvantaged students. The Conferees believe that this section offers an opportunity to help these institutions fulfill their missions to assist students to meet their educational goals.

COMPLIANCE WITH HOUSE RULE XXI

Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XXI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, this conference report contains no congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9(d), 9(e), or 9(f) of rule XXI.

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BOBBY SCOTT,
RUBÉN HINOJOSA,
JOHN F. TIERNEY,
DAVID WU,
SUSAN A. DAVIS,
DANNY K. DAVIS,
TIMOTHY BISHOP,
MAZIE K. HIRONO,
JASON ALTMIRE,
JOHN YARMUTH,
JOE COURTNEY,

Managers on the Part of the House.

TED KENNEDY,
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BARBARA A. MIKULSKI,
JEFF BINGAMAN,
PATTY MURRAY,
JACK REED,
HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON,
BARACK OBAMA,
BERNARD SANDERS,
SHERROD BROWN,
MICHAEL B. ENZI,
LAMAR ALEXANDER,
ORRIN G. HATCH,

Managers on the Part of the Senate.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act of 2007.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

NATIVE AMERICAN HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND SELF-DETERMINATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 633 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2786.

□ 1121

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2786) to reauthorize the programs for housing assistance for Native Americans, with Mr. HOLDEN in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is a reauthorization, and I believe with the initiative of the gentleman from New Mexico, which I hope the House will adopt, will extend the Federal program that responds to the economic needs of the Native Americans. It also has a provision reauthorizing the Native Hawaiian legislation.

The program primarily provides funding, subject, of course, to appropriation, to the recognized tribes for housing. Members will be aware, if they represent areas where the tribes are and if they have visited those areas, that inadequate housing is a serious social problem for many of our Native American residents. And this is a bill that provides money to them to help them meet that need.

Now, the program is changed in three ways: First, as I said, it has not yet been changed but we expect it to be. Our committee has unanimously expressed its support for an amendment that was drafted by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE), who will be offering it, which creates an economic development program to go along with the housing program, and we do believe adequate housing and economic development go hand in hand.

Secondly, at the request of the tribes, the Indian Housing Council, we have added in this a provision for a reserve fund and we have also provided funding for a self-determination program. So this bill comes before us strongly supported by the broad range of the tribes and it continues Federal support to help the tribes themselves build housing and will, I hope, also now have a component for economic development.

There is one item of some controversy which I think all of us in-

volved here regret but we cannot ignore. The gentleman from North Carolina will be offering an amendment which says that no funding under this bill, including the housing program and the, I hope to be adopted, economic development program to the one tribe, the Cherokees, who have recently decided that the descendants of the slaves that the tribe had in the 19th century will be excluded from tribal benefits despite a treaty obligation to the contrary, we hope in the end that will never be necessary. In fact, I believe we will see an amendment that will make it clear that the amendment will only apply as long as the tribe maintains that position and there is pending litigation in the tribal court to change it. We hope it is changed. That's, as I see, the only controversy that applies to the program itself. I take it back. I know there will be an amendment to strike the Native Hawaiian program, and we will very vigorously oppose that. We have had that debate before. This is a program that works well, that is overwhelmingly supported in the State of Hawaii, and we believe should be allowed to continue.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise to offer support for H.R. 2786, the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Reauthorization Act.

Chairman FRANK has described it very well. Basically, we are trying to see that the plight of Native Americans in their housing can be improved. It is basically fairly simple.

As home to many Native American tribes, New Mexico sees this problem up close. The lack of standard housing, the availability of substandard housing, the lack of economic development opportunities, the lack of infrastructure such as water and wastewater treatment facilities all continue to plague people who are trying to make the tribal grounds their home and their place of habitation.

So I am pleased to be an original co-sponsor of the bill and appreciate the hard work of Representative KILDEE, Chairman FRANK, and Chairwoman WATERS in drafting a bill that begins to address these problems.

One of the things that I think is most important is the flexibility and self-determination that begins to work its way into the legislation. Washington has never been the right place to make decisions for either local, State, or tribal governments, and in this bill we begin to send more of that autonomy, to send more of the decision-making power back to the tribes, which I think is an excellent opportunity for them to begin to find their way to self-sufficiency.

We have had one of my good friends come and testify on the bill. That was the president of the Mescalero Apaches, Mark Chino, who came here

during the Financial Services Committee's consideration of the bill and gave his insights on why the program is needed. And, again, I would just like to commend each one of the tribal leaders throughout not only New Mexico but throughout this country for really doing their job to begin to see that tribes deal with the problems that face them, not waiting for the Federal Government to come around and not waiting for BIA, not waiting for any of the agencies. And this bill, in its block grant program, begins to do that.

Another one of the significant things of this bill is that it allows tribes to take loans out, to incur indebtedness, to issue bonds in order to get infrastructure on the tribal grounds. I know that the Mescaleros do not have their own wastewater treatment facility. They instead work with the local communities of Ruidoso and Ruidoso Downs to deal with the wastewater treatment. But as tribes across the country are allowed to incur indebtedness for these solutions, then I think that is going to be extraordinarily important.

Some of the tribes have used their housing money, for instance, to go to FEMA where many of the trailers that were bought and put there for Hurricane Katrina victims ended up not being needed or used, and different tribes, which the Mescaleros were, I think, the first in the Nation to go take advantage of some of those trailers, move them into their native grounds. And it represents a significant improvement over what some of the families already had. So we are beginning to see those roots and those seeds of self-determination already make a difference in the lives of Native Americans. And with this reauthorization, we will be able to continue to see those seeds of local progress, local input becoming the way that we do business.

I support the bill and look forward to the discussion.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, there are issues in which a number of Members of the House are recognized as leaders. There are sometimes issues where one particular Member, by the force of his commitment, by the intellectual powers he brings to bear, by the length of that commitment, really stands out as a leader. And on this particular issue, the issue of Native Americans in general, that is our colleague from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) dating back from his days in the State legislature in Michigan, when he represented a district with no Native Americans. They named cars in his district after Native Americans, but they're the only ones with those names that lived there. And just out of a concern that America honor its commitment in this area, which we haven't always done, he has been for many years a champion of the cause of Native Americans.