

I want to thank Chairwoman FOX for her leadership on this bill as well.

I urge my colleagues to support the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3178, the “Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act,” which streamlines and simplifies information regarding institutions of higher education.

At a time when American innovation and intellectual growth is critical to maintaining our country’s global economic leadership, higher education is an indispensable means of ensuring the next generation can uphold the exceptionally high standards of American innovation.

As the founder and chair of the Children’s Caucus, and a longtime advocate for education opportunities for students at every stage, I know this nation can do better.

In order to ensure tomorrow’s economic, academic, and political leaders are the best our nation has to offer, higher education opportunities must be available and accessible to all.

I support the “Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act” because it makes an important contribution in ensuring higher education remains accessible and possible for all students.

In particular, H.R. 3178 simplifies available information on higher education opportunities by developing and making publicly available a website known as the “College Dashboard Website” that will streamline available information about participating institutions in a readily-accessible manner.

The information on this website will include:

(1) A link to the website of the institution, as well as an identification of the type of institution;

(2) Information about the institution including its attendance, student-faculty ratio, and percentage of degree-seeking or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at the institution who obtain their degree or certificate within a particular time frame;

(3) Financial information including average net price per year and availability of financial aid; and

(4) Data about campus safety, as well as regional and national data regarding starting salaries in all major occupations.

The “College Dashboard Website,” moreover, will include links to more exhaustive data regarding enrollment, completion, costs, financial aid, faculty, and institutional comparison.

Finally, the “College Dashboard Website” will include links that provide net price calculators for participating institutions of higher education.

These resources being made available to the education marketplace will provide important information to students and their families in their search for the best education value possible.

As an effort to simplify the public’s access to institutions of higher education, H.R. 3178 represents a crucial step in bolstering the accessibility of education in America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3178, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the

rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HBCU CAPITAL FINANCING IMPROVEMENT ACT

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5530) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to modify certain provisions relating to the capital financing of historically Black colleges and universities, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5530

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 “HBCU Capital Financing Improvement Act”.

SEC. 2. BOND INSURANCE.

Section 343 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1066b) is amended—

(1) by striking “escrow account” each place it appears and inserting “bond insurance fund”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “an” and inserting “a”; and

(B) in paragraph (8), in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “an” and inserting “a”.

SEC. 3. STRENGTHENING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

Paragraph (9) of section 345 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1066d) is amended to read as follows:

“(9) may, directly or by grant or contract, provide financial counseling and technical assistance to eligible institutions to prepare the institutions to qualify, apply for, and maintain a capital improvement loan, including a loan under this part; and”.

SEC. 4. HBCU CAPITAL FINANCING ADVISORY BOARD.

Paragraph (2) of section 347(c) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1066f(c)) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) REPORT.—On an annual basis, the Advisory Board shall prepare and submit to the authorizing committees a report on the status of the historically Black colleges and universities described in paragraph (1)(A). That report shall also include—

“(A) an overview of all loans in the capital financing program, including the most recent loans awarded in the fiscal year in which the report is submitted; and

“(B) administrative and legislative recommendations, as needed, for addressing the issues related to construction financing facing historically Black colleges and universities.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) and the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5530.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Alabama?

There was no objection.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5530, the HBCU Capital Financing Improvement Act, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 5530 is one of a number of bills on the floor today with a common purpose: improving our country’s higher education system—something that has been a priority of mine for a very long time.

As a member of the Alabama State Board of Education and as chancellor of the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education, I worked to ensure that schools in our State were preparing students to succeed. As a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, I have continued that focus and worked to deliver solutions that will provide all students with the quality education they deserve, and that is why I stand here today.

An important part of helping students succeed is making sure schools and institutions have what they need to serve them well. That is exactly what H.R. 5530 will do.

The bill reforms a program known as the HBCU Capital Financing Program. Congress created this program to provide Historically Black Colleges and Universities with low-cost capital they can use to make infrastructure improvements. It acts as a loan guarantee program so that these institutions can finance or refinance repairs, renovations, and construction on their campuses.

The program also includes an advisory board that is intended to inform the Department of Education on the capital needs of HBCUs, how those needs can be met through the program, and how the program can be improved.

H.R. 5530 will improve access to the HBCU Capital Financing Program by helping schools better understand the resources available to them. It will also strengthen the oversight program, reinforcing the duties of its advisory board by requiring it to report annually to Congress on the program’s financial health. These are simple reforms that will help HBCUs better serve their students and ensure taxpayer dollars are being well-spent.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the gentleman from Alabama also for serving as co-chair of the bipartisan HBCU Caucus and cosponsoring this bill.

I am here today to encourage all of my colleagues to support the HBCU Capital Financing Improvement Act. This bipartisan legislation seeks to offset inequities faced by Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the private bond market by making improvements to the HBCU Capital Financing Program, a program that provides low-cost capital to finance infrastructure improvements at HBCUs.

This bill also makes technical changes to the program, such as changing the name of an account to more adequately describe the purpose of the fund. The simple change in name may increase participation by public HBCUs which otherwise may have been discouraged from participating.

The HBCU Capital Financing Improvement Act also provides additional support to institutions interested in participating but unable to meet the program's financial requirements. This bill allows the Department of Education to offer financial counseling to interested HBCUs, in addition to the technical assistance already provided by the agency through the program.

The HBCU Capital Financing Program provides integral investments to HBCUs, allowing them to provide students with enhanced learning and living environments, rebuild and restructure historic buildings, and provide jobs in communities.

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Without this important program, many HBCUs would be unable to maintain their campuses and make the improvements necessary to serve their student populations. Additionally, this financing program has been an effective tool, and it has exhibited very limited risk to the Federal Government and taxpayers.

I hope these changes will encourage and help more HBCUs take advantage of the capital financing program, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as I hope the public is seeing as they watch this and all our colleagues are learning, all of these higher education bills are moving with bipartisan support. Either you have a Democratic sponsor and a Republican cosponsor or a Republican sponsor and a Democratic cosponsor. As they passed through our committee, they passed unanimously, which just goes to show that there are things that we in this Congress can work on together in a bipartisan fashion to make improvements for the American people.

I hope that we will build on what we are doing today on these very important pieces of higher education legislation not just in our committee, but throughout the Congress because the American people sent us here to work together to get their problems solved and help them improve their lives. I think it is a very important idea we advance in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to simply close by saying that I want to thank Congressman BYRNE and all the committee for their support of this important legislation and to all of our bipartisan cosponsors as well be-

cause what we have here, this legislation will definitely make improvements to the HBCU capital financing program which ultimately supports our HBCUs.

Mr. Speaker, I have no other speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to thank Representative ADAMS for her leadership on the issue of HBCUs in general, for her leadership in the bipartisan caucus, and for advancing this particular piece of legislation. I want to thank all of our colleagues that worked with us not just on this legislation, but through the other work of the caucus.

HBCUs are an integral part of our higher education system in America, and I am proud of the work we have done to address the unique challenges they face. I look forward to continuing that work as we advance legislation like the HBCU Capital Financing Improvement Act. By enhancing an existing program, H.R. 5530, will help these institutions make worthwhile investments that will benefit their students and the United States of America for years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I rise in support of H.R. 5530, "HBCU Capital Financing Improvement Act" and thank my good friend Congresswoman ADAMS for her leadership on this important bill.

In particular, this bill strengthens and streamlines capital financing of historically Black colleges and universities, and bolsters the welfare of these institutions by providing financial counseling and technical assistance to qualified schools.

This legislation will help lay the foundation needed to develop critical solutions to meet current and emerging needs, like student retention and improving graduation rates.

As the founder and chair of the Children's Caucus and Member of the Congressional Black Caucus, I am particularly concerned about the events of the last few days and weeks that highlight a national problem that involves the health and well-being of young African American boys and young men.

One important solution must be access to affordable quality education for every person in this nation.

HBCUs graduate far more than their share of African American professionals.

While the 105 HBCUs represent just 3 percent of the nation's institutions of higher learning, they graduate nearly one quarter of African Americans who earn undergraduate degrees.

I am proud that Texas Southern University one of the nation's great HBCU is a constituent in my home city of Houston.

I routinely partner with Texas Southern University to promote education opportunities and collaborate on community projects routinely.

H.R. 5530 will help facilitate my work with Texas Southern University and other HBCUs by expanding the financial opportunities they need.

America's HBCUs have a proud and solid tradition.

Scattered throughout the nation, many of these institutions of higher learning have fostered the academic development of African-Americans for over a century.

Since their inception, HBCUs have furthered the development of African Americans who have become leaders in science, health, government, business, and education, the military, law, and world affairs including:

Booker T. Washington, Founder of Tuskegee Institute

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King;

Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall;

World renowned opera singer Leontyne Price;

Media mogul Oprah Winfrey;

And Congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas

Mr. Speaker, we must continue to provide our strong support to HBCUs so that every citizen can enjoy a future of hope and opportunity.

We commend these great institutions as they build on a foundation of continued success for every college student.

Graduates of HBCUs have made great contributions to our society, and America, and they continue to serve as role models for all Americans.

Most Americans agree that education provides the best chance of preparing today's youth to lead the Nation throughout the next century.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing the importance of National Historically Black Colleges and Universities and help strengthening them by continued funding these critical institutions and ensuring our nation's youth have access to quality education.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question on the motion offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5530, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EMPOWERING STUDENTS THROUGH ENHANCED FINANCIAL COUNSELING ACT

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3179) to amend the loan counseling requirements under the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3179

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 "Empowering Students Through Enhanced Financial Counseling Act".

SEC. 2. ANNUAL COUNSELING.

Section 485(l) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1092(l)) is amended to read as follows:

"(1) ANNUAL FINANCIAL AID COUNSELING.—

"(1) ANNUAL DISCLOSURE REQUIRED.—