



September 1, 2021

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Chairwoman
Committee on Commerce, Science, &
Transportation
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce, Science, &
Transportation
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Chairwoman
Committee on Science, Space, &
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Ranking Member
Committee on Science, Space, &
Technology
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Cantwell, Ranking Member Wicker, Chairwoman Johnson, and Ranking Member Lucas:

As the House and the Senate consider funding priorities for the upcoming reconciliation bill, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and the 569 Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) located throughout the United States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, request that the Committees you lead **provide equitable funding for HSIs by increasing the funding allocation for the National Science Foundation (NSF) Improving Undergraduate STEM Education HSI Program in proportion to the number of institutions HSIs represent, for a total of \$300 million.**

In FY 2020, HSIs received \$45 million in NSF HSI STEM funding for 569 institutions while HBCUs received \$53 million for 101 HBCUs under the HBCU Excellence in Research Program and HBCU Undergraduate Program administered by the NSF. **To build capacity and enhance equity and inclusion, I urge you to fund the NSF HSI Program proportionate to the number of institutions that HSIs represent and the 5.3 million students that they educate and serve.**

The [American Jobs Plan](#) calls for a \$50 billion investment to the NSF to create a technology directorate that will collaborate with and build upon existing programs across the government. HACU applauds this proposal. The NSF HSI Program helps increase the quality of undergraduate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and increase the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of students pursuing an associate's or baccalaureate degrees in STEM.

According to the U.S. Census, Hispanics represent the nation's largest non-White population. Hispanics comprise the fastest growing sector of the U.S. labor force, per the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Increased funding for the NSF HSI STEM will greatly benefit the two-thirds of the nation's estimated 3.8 million Hispanic students attending HSIs. Due to the influx of Hispanic students in U.S. postsecondary education, HSIs have grown from 293 in 2009 to 569 in 2019, indicating a continued need for greater federal funding for HSIs.

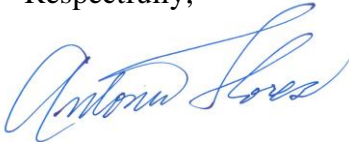
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We are at a critical stage to upgrade America's research infrastructure. The U.S. leadership in new technologies—from artificial intelligence to biotechnology to advanced energy technologies—is critical to both our future economic competitiveness and our national security.

Therefore, HACU and HSIs are asking you to build capacity and enhance equity and inclusion by increasing the mandatory funding allocation for the NSF HSI Program to \$300 million to accommodate the growing number of HSIs and their very diverse enrollment of 5.3 million students they currently educate and serve.

If HACU or I can be of assistance during the reconciliation process, please do not hesitate to contact me at antonio.flores@hacu.net or at 210-576-3214.

Respectfully,



Antonio R. Flores
President and CEO

cc: The Honorable Ben Ray Luján,
The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
The Honorable Bob Menendez
The Honorable Alex Padilla
The Honorable Raul Ruiz, Chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus
The Honorable Joaquin Castro, Co-Chair, Congressional HSI Caucus
The Honorable Raul M. Grijalva, Co-Chair, Congressional HSI Caucus
The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart, Co-Chair, Congressional HSI Caucus
The Honorable Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon, Co-Chair, Congressional HSI Caucus