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August 23, 2021

The Honorable Joe Manchin III
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Hispanic-Serving Institutions' (HSIs) Priority for Reconciliation Bill

Dear Chairman Manchin, Ranking Member Barrasso, Chairman Pallone, and Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers:

On behalf of the undersigned colleges and universities representing the full spectrum of U.S. higher education institutions, we are writing to respectfully request that as the House and the Senate consider funding priorities in the upcoming reconciliation bill to **underscore the urgency of creating two nationally recognized laboratories focused on climate change and its impacts on underserved populations that would be anchored on two HSI campuses through an open competition among all eligible HSIs**. These national labs would address the severe impacts of climate change, climate gentrification, and weatherization in the communities and regions they would serve, but also the dearth of Hispanics and other minorities in science and engineering.

The [American Jobs Plan](#) calls for a \$40 billion investment in upgrading research infrastructure in laboratories across the country, and half of this funding is earmarked for HSIs and other Minority-Serving Institutions, which includes the creation of a new national lab focused on climate to be affiliated with an HBCU. HACU applauds this proposal and, **again, as you proceed through the reconciliation process, I urge you to consider the strong tradition of HSI climate research and resilience on a local, national, and global scale and set aside funding for two different HSI national labs.**

HSIs that are research intensive or very research-intensive universities would serve as anchor research centers for consortia of HSIs, including community colleges and regional universities, to operate as innovative and decentralized cluster labs. This distributed but strongly coordinated approach would also allow consortia members to identify and support talented and promising underrepresented and underserved students for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers. These HSI national labs would democratize STEM opportunities and promote greater collaboration across institutions.

The following are some examples of research on a national and global scale performed at HSI:

- Conducting global environmental research and engaging in investigation and collaboration with other countries to analyze data-driven models using different carbon-neutral and resilient scenarios.
- Leading collaborations on multiple disciplines and leaders on environmental, economic, and social challenges of sustainability to provide a comprehensive evaluation of climate and land-use changes and their impacts on water supply, further assisting local, state, and federal entities with drought contingency planning.
- Performing research for the integration of ecosystem and local community planning to build resilience to climate change and to examine a comprehensive approach to other landscape features such as wildfire risk and water sustainability. This also includes critical new research on sustainability of natural ecosystems under climate change and other human disturbances.

In an effort to promote innovation, creativity, and ingenuity in finding climate solutions that are critical in serving our economy and communities, and promote scientific inquiry, the selection of an anchor HSI for each national lab would be an open competition among all HSIs.

We, the undersigned, **respectfully request your support of this proposal that recognizes the value and importance of the local, national, and global research delivered by HSIs.** We are ready to work with you to meet the needs of our communities by creating two national laboratories focused on climate change that can serve as a hallmark for academic inquiry for all HSIs through an open competition.

Respectfully,

Antonio R. Flores
President and CEO

cc: The Honorable Martin Heinrich, Member, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
The Honorable Mark Kelly, Member, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
The Honorable Ben Ray Luján
The Honorable Bob Menendez
The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto, Member, Senate Committee on Energy & Natural Resources
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
The Honorable Nanette Diaz-Barragan, Member, Energy Subcommittee, House Committee on Energy & Commerce

On Behalf Of:

ARIZONA

Coconino Community College
GateWay Community College
Ottawa University

CALIFORNIA

California State University, East Bay
California State University, Channel Islands
California State University, Northridge
California State University, San Bernardino
California State University, San Marcos
California State University, Fullerton
California State University, Monterey Bay
California State University, Sacramento
California State University, Fresno
Humboldt State University
Riverside Community College District
San Bernardino Community College District
San Bernardino Valley College
San Jose State College
Southern California University of Health Sciences
State Center Community College District
The California State University
University of La Verne

COLORADO

Emily Griffith Technical College

CONNECTICUT

Capital Community College

FLORIDA

Keiser University

ILLINOIS

Morton College
Roosevelt University
University of Illinois Chicago

MASSACHUSETTS

Worcester State University

NEW JERSEY

Bergen Community College
Farleigh Dickinson University

Hudson County Community College
New Jersey City University
Rutgers University-Newark
Saint Elizabeth University
William Paterson University

NEW MEXICO

Clovis Community College
University of New Mexico
Western New Mexico University

NEVADA

College of Southern Nevada
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

NEW YORK

Boricua College
City University of New York (CUNY)
College of Mount Saint Vincent
Dominican College
Hostos Community College
St. Francis College

PENNSYLVANIA

St. Francis College
Holy Family University

PUERTO RICO

Inter American University of Puerto Rico - San Germán Campus
Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico
Universidad Ana G. Mendez Gurabo Campus

TEXAS

Southwest Texas Junior College
Southwestern Adventist University
University of North Texas
University of the Incarnate Word

VIRGINIA

Marymount University

WISCONSIN

Alverno College