

H.R. 2027, the MSI STEM Achievement Act

part of the America COMPETES Act

The MSI STEM Achievement Act will direct Federal science agencies and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to undertake activities to improve the quality of undergraduate STEM education and enhance the research capacity within our Nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Minority Serving Institutions.

Minority serving institutions have long played a critical role in training and educating students of color in STEM fields.

- Student bodies at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) are the most diverse in the nation.
- These and other minority serving institutions (MSIs) offer access to STEM education and a pathway to research or other STEM careers to students who might otherwise have limited opportunities.
- MSIs employ tailored initiatives, policies, and practices that meet students where they are, academically, financially, and socially, while empowering students to reach higher levels of academic achievement.

MSIs have a proven track record of recruiting, retaining, and graduating underrepresented minority students with STEM degrees. Today, the nation's 106 HBCUs make up just 3% of America's colleges and universities, yet they produce 25% of African American graduates in STEM fields. However, more investment and outreach are needed to enable MSIs to fully realize their potential to contribute to the STEM workforce.

The MSI STEM Achievement Act advances research to better understand the challenges MSIs face, their unique contributions to the STEM workforce, and effective approaches to enhancing their capacity to compete for Federal STEM education and research funds.

- The MSI STEM Achievement Act provides for increased transparency, accountability, and accessibility of Federal STEM education and research funding for MSIs.
- The bill directs the Government Accountability Office to compile an inventory of programs targeted to MSIs and make recommendations for how agencies can increase competitiveness of MSIs in such programs.
- The bill also supports research on the challenges and successes MSIs have had in contributing to the STEM workforce, including support for MSI Centers of Innovation to help scale up successful practices pioneered at MSIs.
- The bill requires the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to issue policy guidance for Federal science agencies to improve engagement with MSIs to increase awareness of and competitiveness in agency funding opportunities.