



H.R. 204, the STEM Opportunities Act

part of the America COMPETES Act

Introduced by Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX)

This legislation supports policy reforms, research, and data collection to identify and lower barriers facing women, minorities, and other groups underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) studies and research careers.

- This bipartisan bill passed the House in May 2021
- The STEM Opportunities Act would empower Federal agencies and universities to identify and lower barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of women, minorities, and other groups underrepresented in STEM studies and careers.
- It requires agencies to collect comprehensive demographic data on the grant review process and on STEM faculty at U.S. universities.
- The bill supports research on participation and career trajectories and the implementation of best practices for increasing the recruitment and retention of minority students and faculty.
- This bill also pushes Federal agencies to do more to ensure all researchers have a fair shot at receiving funding for their work.
- According to the National Science Foundation's recently released report entitled, *Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering*, women hold only 25 percent of full professor positions in STEM.
- The numbers are even more striking for faculty in racial and ethnic minority groups. Black STEM faculty represent only 2.5 percent of full professors across all science disciplines, while only 4.6 percent of full professors are Hispanic.
- In some fields, the disparity is particularly stark. Women make up only 19 percent of full professors in computer science and 11 percent in engineering.
- The number of Black and Hispanic professors in computer science are so small, they cannot be reported without compromising their privacy. In engineering, 2.5 percent of professors are Black and 4.3 percent are Hispanic.