

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To encourage the growth of research partnerships between historically Black colleges and universities and Federal agencies to advance development in sub-Saharan Africa.

---

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. WICKER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

---

**A BILL**

To encourage the growth of research partnerships between historically Black colleges and universities and Federal agencies to advance development in sub-Saharan Africa.

1        *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2        *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3        **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4        (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the  
5        “HBCU Africa Partnerships Act”.

6        (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for  
7        this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings.
- Sec. 3. Sense of Congress.

Sec. 4. Purposes.

Sec. 5. Definitions.

Sec. 6. Expanding Federal agency-HBCU partnerships.

Sec. 7. Expanding exchange programming for scholars from Sub-Saharan Africa.

Sec. 8. Communications and outreach programming.

Sec. 9. Congressional briefing.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds the following:

3 (1) High-quality education is central to economic prosperity and social well-being in the United  
4 States and around the world.

6 (2) Historically Black colleges and universities  
7 and other minority serving institutions play a critical  
8 role in ensuring that students of all races,  
9 ethnicities, and backgrounds have access to high-  
10 quality educational opportunities.

11 (3) HBCUs have a long and rich history in educating and facilitating relationships between mem-  
12 bers of the African diaspora in the United States  
13 and throughout the world, from Europe and the  
14 Western Hemisphere to Asia and the African con-  
15 tinent.

17 (4) HBCU alumni have made important con-  
18 tributions to relations between the United States  
19 and Africa in the areas of —

20 (A) democracy and political governance;

21 (B) food and agricultural security;

22 (C) education and human capital;

1 (D) youth development; and

2 (E) public health infrastructure.

3 (5) The United States Government has  
4 partnered with HBCUs and other United States col-  
5 leges and universities, including through—

6 (A) the Department of State’s educational  
7 and cultural exchange programs;

8 (B) the Young African Leaders Initiative,  
9 which supports United States Government ef-  
10 forts to invest in the next generation of African  
11 leaders; and

12 (C) USAID’s Minority Serving Partnership  
13 Initiative to facilitate research partnerships and  
14 engagements with minority-serving institutions,  
15 including HBCUs.

16 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

17 It is the sense of Congress that—

18 (1) the United States should promote and ex-  
19 pand collaborative research partnerships between  
20 Federal agencies and HBCUs that advance joint  
21 partnerships in education, economic growth, food se-  
22 curity, democracy and governance, agriculture, envi-  
23 ronmental conservation, small and medium-sized  
24 business development, humanitarian assistance, and  
25 conflict stabilization in developing countries; and

1           (2) the United States should continue to facili-  
2           tate and deepen partnerships between HBCUs and  
3           Sub-Saharan Africa.

4 **SEC. 4. PURPOSES.**

5           The purposes of this Act are—

6           (1) to strengthen the capacity of HBCUs to  
7           partner with relevant Federal departments and  
8           agencies in support of United States and African  
9           joint interests, including in the areas of democracy  
10          and good governance, food and agricultural security,  
11          education and human capital, youth development,  
12          trade and economic development, and public health  
13          infrastructure;

14          (2) to help integrate the work of HBCUs with  
15          the foreign policy and foreign assistance priorities of  
16          the United States, as appropriate;

17          (3) to bolster and facilitate productive inter-  
18          actions between HBCUs and relevant Federal de-  
19          partments and agencies;

20          (4) to encourage HBCU participation in rel-  
21          evant Federal programs, grants, contracts, and co-  
22          operative agreements;

23          (5) to expand existing partnership initiatives  
24          between HBCUs and relevant Federal departments  
25          and agencies; and

1           (6) to recognize the historic contributions of  
2           HBCUs to relations between the United States and  
3           Africa.

4 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

5           In this Act:

6           (1) **APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-**  
7           **TEES.**—The term “appropriate congressional com-  
8           mittees” means—

9                   (A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of  
10                  the Senate; and

11                   (B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of  
12                  the House of Representatives.

13           (2) **EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE.**—The term  
14           “educational exchange” means an activity listed in  
15           section 602(a) of the Mutual Educational and Cul-  
16           tural Exchange Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2452a(a)).

17           (3) **HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNI-**  
18           **VERSITY; HBCU.**—The terms “historically Black col-  
19           lege or university” and “HBCU” mean a part B in-  
20           stitution described in section 322(2) of the Higher  
21           Education Act of 1965 (22 U.S.C. 1061(2)).

22           (4) **MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION.**—The  
23           term “minority-serving institution” means an insti-  
24           tution listed in section 371(a) of the Higher Edu-  
25           cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).

1           (5) RELEVANT FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND  
2 AGENCIES.—The term “relevant Federal depart-  
3 ments and agencies” includes—

4                   (A) the Department of State;

5                   (B) the United States Agency for Inter-  
6 national Development; and

7                   (C) any other Federal department or agen-  
8 cy that is engaged in designing, providing, or  
9 supporting United States foreign assistance (in-  
10 cluding development finance) that the President  
11 determines is relevant for the purposes of this  
12 Act.

13           (6) SHORT-TERM GRADUATE AND TECHNICAL  
14 EXPERT EXCHANGE PROGRAM.—The term “short-  
15 term graduate and technical expert exchange pro-  
16 gram” means an exchange program lasting 12  
17 months or shorter, including university exchange  
18 programs, professional non-degree programs, and in-  
19 ternships.

20           (7) USAID.—The term “USAID” means the  
21 United States Agency for International Develop-  
22 ment.

1 **SEC. 6. EXPANDING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN RELEVANT**  
2 **DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES AND HISTORI-**  
3 **CALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.**

4 To develop educational grant opportunities and ex-  
5 pand partnerships with HBCUs—

6 (1) the Secretary of State and the USAID Ad-  
7 ministrator should identifying HBCUs that—

8 (A) have entered into a grant, contract, or  
9 cooperative agreement with the Department of  
10 State or USAID; or

11 (B) are eligible to participate in programs  
12 and initiatives under the jurisdiction of either  
13 such agency; and

14 (2) the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Af-  
15 fairs should develop an educational exchange for  
16 HBCUs identified pursuant to paragraph (1) to  
17 deepen relationships between partners in Sub-Saha-  
18 ran African and the United States in ways that ad-  
19 vance United States policy goals in Africa and in-  
20 crease academic collaboration.

21 **SEC. 7. EXPANDING EXCHANGE PROGRAMMING FOR**  
22 **SCHOLARS FROM SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA.**

23 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State and the  
24 USAID Administrator should seek to strengthen and ex-  
25 pand partnerships and educational exchange opportuni-  
26 ties, including by working with HBCUs, that build the ca-

1 capacity and expertise of students, scholars, and experts  
2 from Sub-Saharan Africa in key development sectors, in-  
3 cluding —

4 (1) food systems and agriculture-led economic  
5 growth;

6 (2) food safety and security, nutrition, and  
7 farming, including aquaculture;

8 (3) animal health and pathology;

9 (4) democracy and governance;

10 (5) water, sanitation, and hygiene;

11 (6) public health;

12 (7) microenterprise business development and  
13 entrepreneurship;

14 (8) water security; and

15 (9) environmental resilience.

16 (b) BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AF-  
17 FAIRS PROGRAMMING.—The Secretary of State may es-  
18 tablish a short-term graduate and technical expert ex-  
19 change program for African students, scholars, and tech-  
20 nical experts to spend a semester or academic year of non-  
21 degree study at institutions referred to in section 6(a) to  
22 support knowledge and skills training in the sectors re-  
23 ferred to in subsection (a).



1 **SEC. 8. COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH PROGRAM-**  
2 **MING.**

3 The Secretary of State and the USAID Adminis-  
4 trator shall advance outreach and communications be-  
5 tween HBCUs, the Department of State, and USAID and  
6 expand partnerships with HBCUs by—

7 (1) providing technical assistance in the devel-  
8 opment of grant and partnership applications; and

9 (2) upon request, providing feedback to  
10 HBCUs, to the maximum extent practicable, after a  
11 grant rejection in order to improve future grant ap-  
12 plications, as appropriate.

13 **SEC. 9. CONGRESSIONAL BRIEFING.**

14 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment  
15 of this Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with  
16 the USAID Administrator, shall brief the appropriate con-  
17 gressional committees regarding—

18 (1) the implementation of existing partnerships  
19 and programs between relevant Federal departments  
20 and agencies and HBCUs and efforts to expand  
21 such partnerships and programs;

22 (2) efforts to strengthen the capacity of  
23 HBCUs to participate, or to be eligible to partici-  
24 pate, in relevant programs and initiatives;

25 (3) any progress made towards—

1           (A) advancing plans to develop partner-  
2           ships or programs and initiatives with HBCUs  
3           that are not engaged in existing partnerships  
4           with relevant Federal departments and agen-  
5           cies; and

6           (B) identifying plans in which an HBCU  
7           may participate; and

8           (4) any other information that relevant Federal  
9           departments and agencies determine is relevant to  
10          promoting opportunities to fund, partner, contract,  
11          or otherwise interact with HBCUs.