



HISPANIC
EDUCATION
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National Hispanic Leadership Agenda

December 2, 2019

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room-S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room-S-211, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

We write today on behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of 45 leading national Latino nonpartisan civil rights and advocacy organizations, and on behalf of the Hispanic Education Coalition (HEC), which unites 18 organizations dedicated to improving educational opportunities and outcomes for the more than 59 million Latinos living in the mainland United States and Puerto Rico, to strongly urge you to support prompt passage of the Fostering Undergraduate Talent by Unlocking Resources for Education (FUTURE) Act, S. 1279.

The bill reauthorizes Title III, Part F of the Higher Education Act until the end of FY 2021 and represents the most direct way to restore critical funding to Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs). Current authority expired on September 30, 2019.

The House of Representatives passed the FUTURE Act by voice vote on September 17, 2019, and it is now up to the Senate to take prompt action and pass the FUTURE Act. Due to the Senate's inaction to date, no new grants under this program have been awarded to HSIs by the Department of Education. HSIs need these grants to enhance their STEM programs and capacity to prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs. For the past decade, this program has played a vital role in dramatically increasing the number of graduates in high-demand fields, with an emphasis on STEM and expanding institutional capacity at MSIs, including HSIs.

HSIs alone account for 15 percent of all non-profit colleges and universities, and yet enroll 66 percent of all Hispanic students. Despite having access to fewer resources compared to other institutions, HSIs impressively produce 40 percent of the STEM bachelor's degrees earned by Latino students. The continued investment in MSIs will strengthen the existing pipeline and increase overall STEM degree production.

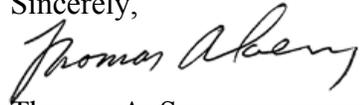
As our nation becomes increasingly diverse and the number of MSIs continues to grow, federal funding for these schools is more important than ever to ensure that we can prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs and ensure that we are investing in and increasing homegrown talent.

It is imperative that we find an immediate way to reinstate critical funding for our HSIs, HBCUs, TCUs, HSIs, PBIs, and remaining MSIs to prevent the closure of STEM, and other programs, at these institutions of higher education.

We strongly urge you to work with your colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to pass FUTURE Act S. 1279 to restore critical funding for HSIs, HBCUs, TCUs, and other MSIs.

We thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Adam Fernandez of MALDEF at afernandez@maldef.org, or John Aguilar of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities at john.aguilar@hacu.net.

Sincerely,



Thomas A. Saenz
President and General Counsel, MALDEF
Chair, NHLA
Co-Chair, NHLA Education Committee



Dr. Antonio R. Flores
President and CEO, HACU
Co-Chair, NHLA Education Committee



Adam Fernandez
Legislative Staff Attorney, MALDEF
Co-Chair, HEC



John Aguilar
Executive Director of Legislative Affairs,
HACU
Co-Chair, HEC

CC: Senator Lamar Alexander, Senator Patty Murray

HEC Member Organizations (18): Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents; ASPIRA Association; Center for Applied Linguistics; Cuban American National Council; Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities; Hispanic Federation; Intercultural Development Research Association; League of United Latin American Citizens; Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Migrant Legal Action Program; Multicultural Education, Training & Advocacy; National Association for Bilingual Education; National Association for State Directors of Migrant Education; National Council for Community and Education Partnerships; National HEP CAMP Association; National Latino Children's Institute; National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association; and UnidosUS.

NHLA Member Organizations (45): Alianza Americas; American G.I. Forum; ASPIRA Association; AVANCE; Casa de Esperanza; Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute; Farmworker Justice; Green Latinos; Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities; Hispanic Federation; Hispanic National Bar Association; Hispanics in Philanthropy; Inter-University Program for Latino Research; Labor Council for Latin American Advancement; LatinoJustice PRLDEF; League of United Latin American Citizens; MANA, A National Latina Organization; Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund; Mi Familia Vota; NALEO Education Fund; National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives; National Association of Hispanic Publications; National Association of Latino Arts and Culture; National Association of Latino Independent Producers; National Conference of Puerto Rican Women; National Day Laborer Organizing Network; National Hispana Leadership Institute; National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators; National Hispanic Council on Aging; National Hispanic Environmental Council; National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts; National Hispanic Media Coalition; National Hispanic Medical Association; National Institute for Latino Policy; National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health; National Latina/o Psychological Association; Presente.org; SER Jobs for Progress; National Southwest Voter Registration Education Project; U.S.- Mexico Foundation; UnidosUS; United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; United States Hispanic Leadership Institute; United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce; and Voto Latino.