

March 19, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Whip
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C.

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Washington, D.C.

Dear Leader McConnell, Majority Whip Thune, and Chairmen Shelby, Blunt, and Alexander,

We are writing to request, as Congress continues its consideration of policy proposals related to the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, that financial support and flexibility for our nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) be included in the Phase III relief legislation that we plan to advance in the coming days.

In recent days, we have actively engaged with HBCU leaders across our states, and a broad range of concerns have emerged, from technological limitations and difficulties that impede virtual learning to administrative inflexibilities that risk constraining the types of supportive services that our institutions would otherwise like to provide. Without a targeted and temporary source of financial relief, along with greater autonomy over funds received, some of our HBCUs and their students may face insurmountable challenges, even long after the COVID-19 crisis subsides.

HBCUs have long played, and continue to play, an indispensable role in crafting pathways to opportunity, particularly for those from underserved communities and for people of color. HBCUs comprise just 3% of colleges and universities, but they produce nearly 20% of African

American bachelor's earners, 27% of African American bachelor's recipients in STEM fields, 80% of African American judges, and roughly 50% of African American doctors and lawyers. These institutions also generate economic vitality and dynamism across our states, with a nearly \$15 billion economic impact and hundreds of thousands of jobs created.

We urge that you join us in working with colleagues in both chambers and on both sides of the aisle to secure the solutions that our schools and our students, the leaders of the future, require.

Sincerely,

Tim Scott
United States Senator

Kelly Loeffler
United States Senator

David A. Perdue
United States Senator

Thom Tillis
United States Senator