



## PROTECT THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE HBCU/MINORITY INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM



### RECOMMENDATION

UNCF urges Congress to protect and enhance funding for the Department of Defense (DoD) Historically Black Colleges and Universities/Minority Institutions (HBCU/MI) Program at **\$40 million**.

### NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

It is of critical national importance to engage the HBCU/MI community in meeting national defense priorities and requirements. As new threats to national security continue to arise, diversifying the group of researchers and innovators working on important defense projects can only serve to strengthen the nation's ability to protect itself.

The HBCU/MI program provides support for HBCU faculty to conduct research and work directly with military laboratories in technical areas of interest to DoD, such as cybersecurity. The program supports Centers of Excellence for Battlefield Capability Enhancements. The Centers of Excellence recruit, educate and train outstanding students and post-doctoral researchers in science and technology areas relevant to the Army, such as cybersecurity, data-to-decisions and autonomy. Overall, the DoD HBCU/MI program plays an important role in assisting HBCUs and Minority-Serving Institutions by cultivating and strengthening their scientific and technical infrastructure and academic capabilities.

Since FY 2010, the Department of Defense has awarded more than 275 research and equipment grants to HBCUs and MSIs. Tapping into the talent pool at HBCUs and MSIs bolsters the academic strength of our national security initiatives.

### BACKGROUND

Despite the benefit to national security, in recent years the HBCU/MI program has been the target of budget cuts. In FY 2017, the Department of Defense proposed to cut the program by 34 percent (\$12 million) below the FY 2016 enacted level, from \$36 million to \$23.6 million. However, Congress rejected its request and instead approved \$33.5 million for the HBCU/MI program, a \$10 million restoration.

We urge Congress to appropriate \$40 million for the HBCU/MI program, which would enable DoD to expand the program to include at least three new Centers of Excellence and award more scholarships and fellowships. This increased investment would thereby boost progress toward diversifying our nation's military research base.

HBCU/MI Funding History	
FY 2010	\$67 million
FY 2011	\$23 million
FY 2012	\$18 million
FY 2013	\$36 million*
FY 2014	\$36 million
FY 2015	\$34 million
FY 2016	\$36 million
FY 2017	\$34 million
HBCU Coalition FY 2018 Request	<b>\$40 million</b>

\*Reflects across-the-board sequestration cut, pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011.