



## INVEST IN STRENGTHENING HBCUs (DISCRETIONARY)



### RECOMMENDATION

UNCF urges Congress to provide **\$375 million** in FY 2018 discretionary funding for the Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) program (Title III, Part B, Section 323). This appropriation is equal to the authorized level.

### NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

Strengthening HBCUs discretionary grants provide essential formula-based aid to HBCUs for academic programs, fiscal and management improvements, and technology. An important strategy in closing the college attainment gap between minority and low-income students and their more advantaged peers is to strengthen the capacity of HBCUs, which are dedicated to serving low-income students of color. Today, 70 percent of students enrolled at HBCUs receive Pell Grants, substantially higher than the 39 percent of Pell recipients at other four-year nonprofit colleges nationwide.

### BACKGROUND

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-315) authorized \$375 million annually in discretionary funds for the Strengthening HBCUs program Title III, Part B, Section 323). However, a wave of cutbacks, beginning in FY 2011, has undermined the important work of HBCUs, giving first-generation, low-income students of color the education they need. Without strong federal investments, President Trump’s commitment to HBCUs and the rebuilding of African American communities will be unfulfilled promises.

HBCUs put Title III resources to excellent use. For example, Clark Atlanta University (Atlanta, Georgia) met the ever-changing demands of a technology-grounded learning environment through its state-of-the-art Academic Instructional Technology Center – due in large measure to the Title III, Part B program. These funds were used to infuse technology throughout all aspects of the curriculum, improve instructional pedagogy and upgrade the university's technology infrastructure.

Another HBCU – the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (Princess Anne, Maryland) – established a state-of-the-art Foreign Language Instructional Center with Title III, Part B funds to help meet the nation’s need for language proficiency in Arabic, Chinese, Russian and other national security-related languages.

Using Title III funds, Spelman College’s (Atlanta, Georgia) Department of Computer and Information Sciences achieved international recognition for the accomplishments of its graduates and its robotics initiative. The SpelBots participated in the National Science Foundation technology showcase in November 2009.

Title III, Part B, Section 323, Discretionary Funding History	
<b>FY 2010</b>	\$267 million
<b>FY 2011</b>	\$237 million
<b>FY 2012</b>	\$228 million
<b>FY 2013</b>	\$216 million*
<b>FY 2014</b>	\$224 million
<b>FY 2015</b>	\$228 million
<b>FY 2016</b>	\$245 million
<b>FY 2017</b>	\$245 million
<b>HBCU Coalition FY 2018 Request</b>	<b>\$375 million</b>

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