

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2007

Legislation Re-introduced to Strengthen Technology at HBCU, HSI, and Tribal Colleges and Universities

Dear Colleague,

As Cosponsors of H.R. 921 in the 109th Congress, **The Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act of 2005**, we have reintroduced this legislation and we hope that you will join us as a cosponsor of **The Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act of 2007**. The bill would address the instrumentation and technology infrastructure gap that exists at Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).

According to a February 26, 2004 report by the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education:

- (1) Less than half (45%) of MSI students own computers
- (2) One quarter of MSIs either recommended or required student computer ownership or provided financial assistance for students to acquire computers
- (3) 88% of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have only the minimum standard of connectivity, indicating that most HBCUs are not taking advantage of high speed connections available in their communities
- (4) Over 60% of the U.S. population uses the Internet at home, while only 37% of Hispanics and 46% of African Americans have Internet access at home


The Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act of 2007 would establish a new grant program within the U.S. Department of Commerce that would provide up to \$250 million for 2008 and such sums as may be necessary for fiscal years 2009 through 2012 to strengthen the ability of MSIs to:

- (1) Purchase digital and wireless network technologies and infrastructure equipment for campus wiring, equipment upgrades and hardware/software;
- (2) Develop and provide technology education services (including faculty and teacher education);
- (3) Provide technical assistance through workshops, distance learning and other technology applications;
- (4) Provide professional development for faculty and administrators with responsibility for education with emphasis on adapting all modes of instruction to include technology;
- (5) Implement joint projects and consortia with other MSIs to provide technology education;
- (6) Foster the use of information communications technology to increase engineering, math and science research.

If you have questions, or would like to cosponsor **The Minority Serving Institution Digital and Wireless Technology Opportunity Act of 2007**, please contact Lars Hydle (Towns) at 5-5936 or Jamie Jones Miller (Forbes) at 5-6365.

Sincerely,


Ed Towns
Member of Congress


J. Randy Forbes
Member of Congress