



October 15, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairman
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor,
and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Chairman
Senate Committee on Appropriations
304 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Robert Scott
Chairman
House Committee on Education and Labor
2176 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Murray, Chairman Leahy, Chairman Scott, Chairman DeLauro, Speaker Pelosi, Senator Schumer, & Representative Hoyer,

As negotiations continue in the budget reconciliation process, the Southern Education Foundation (SEF) is writing to request at least \$3.9 billion for improving research and development infrastructure for Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Historically Black Graduate Institutions (HBGIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). We also request that HBCU funding is de-coupled based on their distinct relationship with America. At the requested level of funding, if funding were de-coupled, HBCUs would receive \$1.9 billion, because of their unique circumstances, keeping the current pot of \$2 billion intact to be divided among the TCUs and MSIs. Since our founding in 1867, Southern Education Foundation has been actively involved in the development and support of HBCUs across the nation. We envision a world where students, regardless of background, can receive an education that propels them toward the opportunity-rich life they deserve. We believe that this legislation has the potential to address long-standing inequities and to better support the advancement of students who attend HBCUs and their communities. However, we are concerned that the low funding levels within the reconciliation legislation would not be sufficient to address the significant needs of HBCUs and HBGIs, and their students, faculty, staff, and their surrounding communities.

While short of the \$45 billion President Biden proposed for HBCUs, HBGIs, TCUs, and MSIs in the American Jobs Plan, \$3.9 billion is an important step to putting these institutions on a more equal playing field with better-resourced institutions. We are hoping that given America's unique relationship with HBCUs and their history, and the commitment expressed by Congress, state

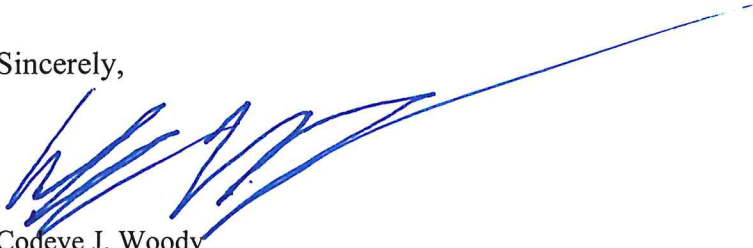
legislative bodies, the judicial branch and the executive branch of government, to mitigating the vestiges of the *de jure* discrimination visited upon HBCUs for nearly 200 years, you will agree to simply de-couple HBCU funding to ensure that HBCUs are not hamstrung when competing against well-resourced institutions; some of which are Historically White Colleges and Universities (HWCUs) that are flagship institutions or R-1 research institutions, that are demographic MSIs, because they enroll 25% or more of a targeted underrepresented racial or ethnic minority group.

The \$2 billion allocated in the reconciliation process is an inadequate amount of funding relative to the infrastructure needs at these institutions. These funds would be allocated across federal agencies, including the Department of Energy, with half of the funds reserved for HBCUs, HBGIs, TCUs, and MSIs, including the creation of a new national lab, focused on climate that will be affiliated with an HBCU.

We respectfully request that you increase the current proposed funding in the budget reconciliation process for improving research & development infrastructure to at least \$3.9 billion, while also de-coupling HBCU funding so that HBCUs would receive \$1.9 billion in funding due to their unique circumstances, mission driven purpose, as well as the distinct history that HBCUs have with this nation. This is a first step in supporting the development of modern infrastructure for these institutions in a non-competitive, more inclusive manner.

Please do not hesitate to contact me, [the SEF Director of Government Affairs & Advocacy](#), Codeye Woody at (404) 991-6764 or by Email at cwoody@southerneducation.org, or the SEF President & CEO, Raymond Pierce at (404) 523-0001 or rpierce@southerneducation.org, should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,



Codeye J. Woody
Director of Government Affairs & Advocacy
Southern Education Foundation

CC: The Honorable Patrick Leahy, President Pro Tempore, The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House, The Honorable Charles Schumer, Senate Majority Leader, The Honorable Steny Hoyer, House Majority Leader, Members of the Senate HELP Committee, Senate Committee on Appropriations, House Committee on Education and Labor, and the House Committee on Appropriations

Chairman Patty Murray (WA); Chairman Patrick Leahy (VT); Chairman Robert Scott (VA); Chairman Rosa DeLauro (CT)