

## **Chairman Thompson & Rep. Luetkemeyer Introduce Bipartisan Legislation to Strengthen Partnerships between HBCUs and Homeland Security**

**March 5, 2019** (WASHINGTON) – Today, Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS), Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security, along with Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO), introduced [H.R. 1494](#), the *Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) Homeland Security Partnerships Act*, which would strengthen the partnerships between HBCUs and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

**“For nearly two centuries, HBCUs have provided African Americans the opportunity to compete on a level playing field – and their alumni have contributed immeasurably to the American culture, economy, and government,”** Chairman Thompson said. **“Since its inception, DHS has realized the value in working with HBCUs – but the partnership is not as robust as it should be. Unfortunately, opportunities for minority students are often subpar. There is a wealth of knowledge and talent at HBCUs and it would undoubtedly be in our interest to ensure this knowledge and talent is utilized in defending the homeland.”**

**“The Trump administration and the Department of Homeland Security understand the value of working with HBCUs. This bill will allow us to improve on past progress and provide additional opportunities to participate in federal programs,”** said Congressman Luetkemeyer. **“As a HBCU graduate representing Missouri’s third district and my alma mater, Lincoln University, I am proud to join Congressman Bennie Thompson in introducing this legislation to give HBCUs a level playing field when competing for federal grants and ensure students have access to DHS career and scholarship opportunities.”**

In 2017, President Trump established an initiative to provide equitable opportunities for HBCUs to participate in Federal programs – however, in practice, the partnerships between DHS and HBCUs has fallen short of the Department’s stated priorities.

The *HBCUs Homeland Security Partnerships Act* would require DHS to issue a goal-based strategy to achieve stronger partnerships with HBCUs – and then monitor and report on that strategy, thereby ensuring the Department’s progress in providing contracting, research and development, and career opportunities to HBCUs and minority-serving institutions.

*The HBCUs Homeland Security Partnerships Act* is cosponsored by: Rep. Eleanor Holmes-Norton (D-DC), Rep. Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL), Rep. Sanford D. Bishop Jr. (D-GA), Rep. Henry C. "Hank," Jr. Johnson (D-GA), Rep. Robin L. Kelly (D-IL), Rep. Cedric L. Richmond (D-LA), Rep. Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO), Rep. Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY), Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN), Rep. Al Green (D-TX), Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Rep. Donald M. Payne, Jr (D-NJ), Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA), Rep. Joyce Beatty (D-OH), Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC), Rep. James E. Clyburn (D-SC), Rep. Karen Bass (D-CA), and Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ).

[H.R. 1494 Fact Sheet](#)

[H.R. 1494 Full Text](#)

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