

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 8, 2025

The Honorable Linda McMahon  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

**RE: Request for Resumption of Funding for Hispanic-Serving Institution Grant Programs**

Dear Secretary McMahon:

As members of the Congressional Hispanic Conference—the only caucus of Hispanic Republican lawmakers in Congress—we write to express our deep concern with the Department of Education’s September 10, 2025, announcement to terminate discretionary funding for several Minority-Serving Institution grant programs, including those that support Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs).<sup>1</sup> Specifically, we are concerned about the suspension of the Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program (Title III, Part E), Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program (Title V, Part A), and Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans Program (Title V, Part B).<sup>2</sup> Given the extraordinary value of these programs in strengthening America’s workforce and serving the very communities that have helped sustain our Republican majority, we respectfully urge you to reconsider this decision and ensure continued support for these vital programs.

As Hispanic Republicans, we firmly believe in upholding fiscal responsibility and have been strong proponents of supporting evidence and merit-based rationale over radical DEI policies as it relates to federal funding decisions. While we understand the Department raised constitutional concerns that HSI programs may violate the equal-protection component of the Fifth Amendment’s Due Process Clause “by conferring benefits exclusively to institutions that meet racial or ethnic quotas”, this reasoning overlooks the reality of most HSIs.<sup>3</sup> These institutions do not artificially seek to meet quotas to obtain federal funds; rather, they serve the communities in which they are located.

For example, the University of Texas at El Paso is located in El Paso County, where 82.6 percent of the population is Hispanic.<sup>4</sup> Florida International University, in Miami-Dade County, serves a population that is 68.7 percent Hispanic.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the University of Texas at San Antonio and St. Mary’s University are

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education. (2025, September 10). U.S. Department of Education ends funding to racially discriminatory discretionary grant programs at Minority-Serving Institutions. U.S. Department of Education. <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-ends-funding-racially-discriminatory-discretionary-grant-programs-minority-serving-institutions>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2025). El Paso County, Texas. United States Census Bureau. [https://data.census.gov/profile/El\\_Paso\\_County,\\_Texas?g=050XX00US48141](https://data.census.gov/profile/El_Paso_County,_Texas?g=050XX00US48141)

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2025). Miami-Dade County, Florida. United States Census Bureau. [https://data.census.gov/profile/Miami-Dade\\_County,\\_Florida?g=050XX00US12086](https://data.census.gov/profile/Miami-Dade_County,_Florida?g=050XX00US12086)

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located in Bexar County, which is 59 percent Hispanic.<sup>6</sup> The University of Arizona is in Pima County, where 35 percent of residents are Hispanic.<sup>7</sup> The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, in Hidalgo County, serves a population that is 91 percent Hispanic.<sup>8</sup> California State University, Bakersfield, located in Kern County, serves a community that is 54.9 percent Hispanic.<sup>9</sup>

For these universities and many others serving predominantly Hispanic communities, failing to meet the 25 percent undergraduate population necessary for HSI designation would mean failing to serve their communities. Their eligibility is a byproduct of their mission—not a pursuit of quotas.

Further, reprogramming roughly \$350 million in discretionary funds away from HSI programs risks undermining critical investments in America’s workforce and research capacity.<sup>10</sup> These programs play a vital role in preparing students from HSIs for careers in STEM, developing the next generation of teachers, and advancing research in emerging fields such as artificial intelligence and advanced manufacturing. Redirecting these funds away from HSI-designated institutions could disproportionately harm all the students at these colleges and universities—regardless of their ethnicity—and weaken the talent pipeline needed to meet the challenges facing our country.

It is critical to note that HSIs are directly advancing President Trump’s agenda. At the University of Texas at San Antonio, researchers are pioneering work in cybersecurity and artificial intelligence, strengthening America’s ability to win the cyber arms race against our adversaries. At the University of Texas at El Paso, faculty and students are contributing to hypersonics research, helping secure the competitive edge necessary to maintain peace through strength. At California State University, Bakersfield, California’s only petroleum geology program is training the next generation of energy experts, directly supporting the President’s goal of achieving American energy independence. The University of Arizona is advancing agricultural innovation, reinforcing domestic food security. Florida International University is fostering entrepreneurship through its nationally recognized business programs, helping fuel small business growth. The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is strengthening the nation’s health workforce, helping make America healthy again. Finally, at St. Mary’s University, the next generation of attorneys, scientists, engineers, and educators is being trained in a Catholic, faith-based environment, ensuring that our future legal, STEM, and educational professionals are grounded in the values that underpin our nation’s founding principles. Clearly, HSIs not only serve Hispanic communities but also help deliver on President Trump’s priorities.

To that end, we respectfully request the restoration of funding for the Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program, the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program, and the Promoting

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2025). Bexar County, Texas. United States Census Bureau. [https://data.census.gov/profile/Bexar\\_County,\\_Texas?g=050XX00US48029#race-and-ethnicity](https://data.census.gov/profile/Bexar_County,_Texas?g=050XX00US48029#race-and-ethnicity)

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2025). Pima County, Arizona. United States Census Bureau. [https://data.census.gov/profile/Pima\\_County,\\_Arizona?g=050XX00US04019](https://data.census.gov/profile/Pima_County,_Arizona?g=050XX00US04019)

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2025). Hidalgo County, Texas. United States Census Bureau. [https://data.census.gov/profile/Hidalgo\\_County,\\_Texas?g=050XX00US48215](https://data.census.gov/profile/Hidalgo_County,_Texas?g=050XX00US48215)

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2025). Kern County, California. United States Census Bureau. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/kerncountycalifornia/INC910223>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

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Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans Program. The future of our workforce depends on these investments to prepare the next generation of teachers, STEM leaders, and researchers.

We appreciate your timely attention to this matter and look forward to working together to ensure fairness and opportunity in federal education programs, while ensuring all communities have an equal chance to achieve the American Dream.

Sincerely,



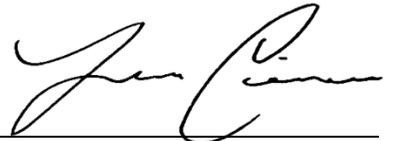
Tony Gonzales  
Member of Congress



David Valadao  
Member of Congress



Monica De La Cruz  
Member of Congress



Juan Ciscomani  
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Maria Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress



Carlos Gimenez  
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