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To: Universities and
 Colleges

HOUSE BILL NO. 656

1 AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI TO PROVIDE
 2 FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO AN ORGANIZATION COMPRISED OF TWO OR MORE
 3 STATE-SUPPORTED HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES OR UNIVERSITIES
 4 (HBCUS) LOCATED IN MISSISSIPPI; TO DEFINE THE PURPOSE OF SUCH
 5 ORGANIZATION, WHICH SHALL BE KNOWN AS THE MISSISSIPPI HBCU
 6 CONSORTIUM, TO IMPLEMENT PLANS DEVELOPED BETWEEN THE CONSORTIUM
 7 AND THE MISSISSIPPI HBCU TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIP; TO PROVIDE FOR
 8 THE FORMATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP PURSUANT TO A MEMORANDUM OF
 9 COOPERATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY
 10 DEVELOPMENT, THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER
 11 LEARNING, HBCUS THAT PARTICIPATE IN THE CONSORTIUM AND
 12 PARTICIPATING PRIVATE INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS; TO STIPULATE THAT
 13 ANY FUNDS APPROPRIATED TO THE CONSORTIUM BY THE LEGISLATURE SHALL
 14 BE DIVIDED EQUALLY BETWEEN HBCUS THAT PARTICIPATE IN THE
 15 CONSORTIUM; TO AUTHORIZE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE
 16 INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND
 17 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TO PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE AND
 18 SUPPORT TO THE CONSORTIUM, THE INITIATIVE AND THE PARTNERSHIP IN
 19 ACCOMPLISHING THEIR MUTUAL KEY OBJECTIVES AND TASKS; TO CREATE THE
 20 "MISSISSIPPI INITIATIVE ON HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND
 21 UNIVERSITIES (HBCUS)" TO PROVIDE OVERSIGHT TO FOCUS ON METHODS TO
 22 STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF HBCUS TO PROVIDE THE HIGHEST QUALITY
 23 EDUCATION; TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR HBCUS TO PARTICIPATE IN
 24 AND BENEFIT FROM STATE PROGRAMS; TO ENSURE THAT THE STATE OF
 25 MISSISSIPPI HAS THE HIGHEST PROPORTION OF COLLEGE GRADUATES FROM
 26 HBCUS IN THE COUNTRY; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

27 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

28 WHEREAS, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs)
 29 have made historic and ongoing contributions to the general
 30 welfare and prosperity of our country; and



31 WHEREAS, America's HBCUs, for over one hundred fifty years,
32 have produced leaders in business, government, academia, and the
33 military and have provided generations of men and women with hope
34 and educational opportunity; and

35 WHEREAS, 105 HBCUs are located in twenty states, the District
36 of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands and serve more than
37 300,000 undergraduate and graduate students; and

38 WHEREAS, these institutions continue to be important engines
39 of economic growth and community service, and they are proven
40 ladders of intergenerational advancement for men and women of all
41 ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds, especially African
42 Americans; and

43 WHEREAS, these institutions also produce a high number of
44 baccalaureate recipients who go on to assume leadership and
45 service roles in their communities and who successfully complete
46 graduate and professional degree programs; and

47 WHEREAS, in February 2010, President Obama signed Executive
48 Order 13532 to highlight excellence, innovation, and
49 sustainability of HBCUs, using partnerships with federal agencies
50 and departments and the private sector to sustain the important
51 work of HBCUs; NOW, THEREFORE,

52 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

53 **SECTION 1.** It is the intent and purpose of this act to
54 promote and enhance the role of historically black colleges and
55 universities located in Mississippi as prime contributors to the



56 economic growth of the state by encouraging such institutions to
57 continue their efforts to organize a consortium for the purpose of
58 strategically partnering with the state and private industry to
59 effectively achieve superior economic development in Mississippi.

60 **SECTION 2.** As used in this act, the following terms shall
61 have the meaning ascribed in this section, unless the context
62 clearly requires otherwise:

63 (a) "Board" means the Board of Trustees of
64 State Institutions of Higher Learning.

65 (b) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Higher
66 Education.

67 (c) "Department" means the Mississippi Department of
68 Economic and Community Development.

69 (d) "Director" means the executive director of the
70 Mississippi Department of Economic and Community Development.

71 (e) "Historically black college or university" or
72 "HBCU" means and includes any state-supported historically black
73 college or university located in Mississippi, namely, Alcorn State
74 University, Jackson State University and Mississippi Valley State
75 University.

76 (f) "Mississippi HBCU Consortium" or "consortium" means
77 an organization or association comprised of two (2) or more HBCU
78 institutions, the purpose of which is to facilitate and implement
79 the strategic plans and objectives developed by and between the
80 consortium and the Mississippi HBCU Technology Partnership.



81 (g) "Mississippi HBCU Technology Partnership" or
82 "partnership" means an organization or association formed pursuant
83 to the terms of a memorandum or cooperation by and among the
84 department, the board, the institutions participating in the
85 consortium and participating organizations from private industry,
86 the purpose of which is to develop certain strategic plans and key
87 objectives to leverage the collective resources of each
88 partnership participant to achieve superior economic growth in
89 Mississippi.

90 **SECTION 3.** In addition to the educational programs already
91 provided for and funded by the state, financial support may also
92 be provided for the organization, operation and continuation of a
93 Mississippi HBCU Consortium. Funding for the consortium shall be
94 in such amount as may be appropriated by the Legislature, and any
95 such appropriation shall be expended for the equitable benefit of,
96 or distributed by the consortium in equal amounts to the HBCU
97 institutions participating in the consortium to be used
98 exclusively for meeting the key objectives of the consortium and
99 the Mississippi HBCU Technology Partnership.

100 **SECTION 4.** (1) The "Mississippi Initiative on Historically
101 Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)" or "initiative," as used
102 in this section, is an organizational unit of the Board of
103 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, established and
104 administered by the Commissioner of Higher Education for the
105 purpose of providing oversight to focus on ways to strengthen the



106 capacity of historically black colleges and universities to
107 provide the highest quality education, increase opportunities for
108 these institutions to participate in and benefit from state
109 programs, and ensure that the State of Mississippi has the highest
110 proportion of college graduates from HBCUs in the country. The
111 initiative shall operate in consultation with the Mississippi
112 Consortium of HBCUs, pursuant to Sections 1 through 3 of this act.

113 (2) The initiative shall work with state departments,
114 agencies, offices, the private sector, educational associations,
115 philanthropic organizations and other partners to increase the
116 capacity of HBCUs to provide the highest quality education to a
117 greater number of students, and to take advantage of these
118 institutions' capabilities in serving the state's needs through
119 five (5) core tasks:

120 (a) Strengthening the capacity of HBCUs to participate
121 in state programs;

122 (b) Fostering enduring private-sector initiatives and
123 public-private partnerships while promoting specific areas and
124 centers of academic research and programmatic excellence
125 throughout all HBCUs;

126 (c) Improving the availability, dissemination, and
127 quality of information concerning HBCUs to inform public policy
128 and practice;

129 (d) Sharing administrative and programmatic practices
130 within the consortium for the benefit of all; and



131 (e) Exploring new ways of improving the relationship
132 between the state and HBCUs.

133 (3) (a) The board is authorized and directed to provide all
134 necessary and appropriate guidance, assistance, and support to
135 facilitate strategy development and coordinated implementation by
136 the consortium, the initiative and the partnership to accomplish
137 their respective and mutual key tasks and objectives.

138 (b) In furtherance of paragraph (a) of this subsection,
139 the board may enter into one (1) or more memoranda of cooperation
140 with the consortium, the initiative and the partnership on terms
141 deemed by the board to be appropriate, mutually beneficial, and in
142 the best interest of the consortium, the initiative and the
143 partnership.

144 (4) All state departments and agencies are encouraged to
145 create an annual plan of its efforts to strengthen the capacity of
146 HBCUs through increased participation in appropriate federal
147 programs and initiatives. Where appropriate, each agency plan
148 shall address, among other things, the agency's proposed efforts
149 to:

150 (a) Establish how the department or agency intends to
151 increase the capacity of HBCUs to compete effectively for grants,
152 contracts or cooperative agreements and to encourage HBCUs to
153 participate in state programs;



154 (b) Identify state programs and initiatives in which
155 HBCUs may be either underserved or underused as national
156 resources, and improve HBCUs' participation therein; and

157 (c) Encourage public-sector, private-sector and
158 community involvement in improving the overall capacity of HBCUs.

159 (5) If a department or agency creates an annual plan
160 pursuant to subsection (4), then the department or agency shall:

161 (a) Provide appropriate measurable objectives and,
162 after the first year, shall annually assess that department's or
163 agency's performance on the goals set in the previous year's
164 agency plan; and

165 (b) Provide a written summary of the objectives and
166 goals to the education committee of the senate and the education
167 administration and planning committee of the house of
168 representatives within thirty (30) days of the annual assessment
169 required in paragraph (a) of this subsection.

170 (6) The initiative may establish a board of advisors to
171 consist of no more than twenty-five (25) members appointed by the
172 Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning. The
173 board of advisors shall include representatives of a variety of
174 sectors, including philanthropy, education, business, finance,
175 entrepreneurship, innovation and private foundations, as well as
176 sitting HBCU presidents. The board may advise the Board of
177 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and the
178 initiative in the following areas:



179 (a) Improving the identity, visibility and distinctive
180 capabilities and overall competitiveness of HBCUs;

181 (b) Engaging the philanthropic, business, government,
182 military, homeland security and education communities in a
183 dialogue regarding new HBCU programs and initiatives;

184 (c) Improving the ability of HBCUs to remain fiscally
185 secure institutions that can assist the state in reaching its
186 educational goals;

187 (d) Elevating the public awareness of HBCUs; and

188 (e) Encouraging public-private investments in HBCUs.

189 **SECTION 5.** (1) The Department of Economic and Community
190 Development is authorized and directed to provide all necessary
191 and appropriate administrative assistance, support, and guidance
192 to facilitate strategy development and coordinated implementation
193 by the Mississippi HBCU Consortium, the Mississippi Initiative on
194 HBCUs and the Mississippi HBCU Technology Partnership to
195 accomplish their respective and mutual key objectives.

196 (2) In furtherance of subsection (1), the department may
197 enter into one (1) or more memorandums of cooperation with the
198 consortium and the partnership on such terms as are deemed by the
199 executive director to be appropriate, mutually beneficial, and in
200 the best interest of the consortium and the partnership.

201 **SECTION 6.** (1) The provisions of Sections 1 through 4 of
202 this act shall be codified in Chapter 101, Title 37, Mississippi
203 Code of 1972.



204 (2) The provisions of Section 5 of this act shall be
205 codified in Chapter 55, Title 57, Mississippi Code of 1972.

206 **SECTION 7.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
207 and after July 1, 2019.

