

## Hispanic Education Resources and Empowerment Act

In 2017, there were 59.1 million Hispanics in the U.S. This number will only continue to grow; the U.S. Census Bureau projects that in 2060, there will be 119 million Hispanics living in the U.S., almost double what it is now. As the Hispanic population comprises a larger share of the total U.S. population, it is essential that our education system addresses the specific needs of Hispanic students.

Hispanic growth is increasing the fastest among all ethnic groups. Yet, there still remains large achievement gaps that Hispanics face when trying to graduate and enter the workforce. Currently, the proportion of Hispanics who graduate within 6 years is 10 percentage points lower than whites. According to a report done by Rice University, if the gap doesn't diminish soon, there will not be a large enough workforce to replace the retiring baby boomers.

The *Hispanic Educational Resources and Empowerment Act of 2019* would address the current educational crisis for Hispanic students by creating a new HSI-designated program that supports partnerships and collaboration between Hispanic-Serving Institutions and school districts to help Hispanic students navigate the postsecondary system and bridge the gap towards higher completion rates and educational attainment. Hispanic students are disproportionately low-income and first generation college students, and Hispanic students still lag behind all other ethnic groups in graduating with a high school diploma.

We must ensure Hispanic students are prepared to graduate from high school and transition to college, enhancing students' potential for educational attainment. By providing school districts with access to partnerships with colleges, we can ensure that Hispanic students are gaining access to quality teachers, college credit-bearing course work, and dual-enrollment courses that prepare students for college. Students that start preparing for college coursework in high school are more likely to obtain a college degree and graduate in five years.

Additionally, the bill would:

- Create a new HSI-designated program
- Define in law Emerging HSI, Hispanic-Serving School Districts, and Emerging Hispanic-Serving School Districts
- Promote and support PK-12 and higher education collaboration between HSIs and Hispanic-Serving School Districts (HSSDs)
- Expand and enhance the course offerings, program quality, and overall functionality of the colleges, universities, and school districts that educate the majority of Hispanic students
- Authorize the Secretary of Education to provide grants and related assistance to HSIs for the development of model and innovative agreements between higher education and secondary schools
- Create a new set of allowable uses focused on increasing academic alliances and collaborative partnerships between higher education institutions and school districts that enroll the majority of Hispanic students