WASHINGTON – Agriculture Committee Chairman David Scott, Education and Labor Committee Chairman Bobby Scott, HBCU Caucus Chair and Agriculture Committee Vice Chair Alma Adams, Agriculture Research Subcommittee Chair Stacey Plaskett, and Agriculture Committee Member Al Lawson today in a letter called on Governors and state leaders to address funding disparities between 1890 and 1862 Land-Grant Institutions.

“For far too long the funding disparity between 1890 and 1862 Land-Grant Institutions has prevented our country from supporting our students when it comes to agriculture research and innovation. That is why today I am calling on Governors and state leaders to finally put an end to this gap and work to ensure 1890 Institutions are fully funded in order to better support their students and agriculture programs,” said Chairman David Scott.

“Ensuring that 1890 African American Land-Grant Institutions receive the proper funding will help to support the recruitment, mentoring, and training of students; the renovation and creation of new research facilities, classrooms, and programs; and will better position America to compete in the 21st century,” Chairman David Scott continued.

“Equitable funding for the 1890 African American Land-Grant Institutions has been a pillar of my work in the House and as the Chairman of our House Agriculture Committee, and it is so important that we address this, not only for the injustice that it is, but also in order to ensure that America remains resilient, secure and competitive. We, as a nation, must continue to play a key role in supporting these institutions and the potential of bright young minds to contribute to American agriculture,” Chairman David Scott added.

“For decades, 1890 Land-Grant institutions have provided students with high-quality education that is critical to agricultural communities across the country. These institutions—originally created to support the education of Black students—help fulfill our nation’s promise of higher education,” said Chairman Robert C. “Bobby” Scott. “Unfortunately, many states have chronically and disproportionately underfunded 1890 Land-Grant institutions compared to their 1862 Land-Grant counterparts. For 1890 Land-Grant institutions to deliver on their mission, we must push states to fund them equitably.”

“The 1890 Land-Grant institutions – many of the largest Historically Black Colleges and Universities by enrollment – have never received equitable funding compared with the predominately white 1862 Land-Grant institutions,” said Congresswoman Alma Adams, Vice Chair of the House Committee on Agriculture and founder and co-chair of the Congressional Bipartisan HBCU Caucus. “Earlier this month, Forbes magazine revealed that many of the 1890s were underfunded by billions of dollars since 1987. For example, my alma mater North Carolina A&T State University was underfunded by a total of $2.8 billion during that timeframe. These inequities continue today. In FY2020, 100% of match eligible NIFA funds at 1862 institutions in the fifty states received state matches. This number was only 82% at 1890 institutions – all HBCUs. I am proud to join my congressional colleagues in calling on state governments to fully match federal investments in their 1890 Land-Grant institutions.”
Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture, and Research Chair Stacey Plaskett said, “As Chair of the Subcommittee on Biotechnology, Horticulture and Research, I am committed to ensuring that we are investing substantive funding to support our next generation of farmers. Matching requirement waivers and state discretion over matching funds has led to funding disparities between 1890 and 1862 Land-Grant institutions. The funding security and resiliency of the 1890 Land-Grant institutions is paramount. As we celebrate Black History during this month and the countless contributions of African Americans in the fields of agriculture and education, it is evident that consistent fund matching by states between 1890 and 1862 Land-Grant institutions will go a long way to maintain the integrity of these drivers of innovation.”

“1890 Land-Grant institutions must be adequately funded by states across the country,” Rep. Lawson said. “For too long, some states have fallen short of their investment by failing to appropriate the necessary state matching funds with federal funding. This is disheartening because these institutions continuously demonstrate ground-breaking research that advances technology for the agricultural industry and other sectors across the country. Institutions such as Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University exhibit their ability to be among some of the top innovation leaders. Without sufficient state funding, it will be increasingly difficult for these institutions to train the next generation of agriculture leaders and to remain globally competitive.”

A copy of the full letter is available here.

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