

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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NEWSLETTER

OFFICE OF STATE AND FEDERAL RELATIONS

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Greetings

The 2021-2022 academic year yielded significant advances and never-before achieved milestones for Baltimore's anchor institution and Maryland's Preeminent Urban Public Research University. It was an unparalleled year of momentous gains beginning with a record number of [applications](#) for the fall 2021 semester and culminating with historic enrollment of more than 8,500 students—the largest in the University's 155-year history!

Morgan's Office of State and Federal Relations (OSFR) worked to amplify these milestones—and more—among key constituencies and stakeholder groups this year. Included in this effort, OSFR was actively engaged in a robust Maryland 2022 Legislative Session and honored to have hosted visits from five U.S. Secretaries from the Biden-Harris Administration during this recently concluded spring semester. From record enrollment to breaking ground for new campus facilities, Morgan momentum is real and is evident throughout our campus. Building upon this momentum, OSFR implemented President David K. Wilson's [new 10-year strategic plan](#), "Transformation Morgan 2030: Leading the Future."

We continue to recognize the importance of working collaboratively with federal, state and local elected officials in this office's enduring commitment to Morgan's mission of **Growing the Future** and **Leading the World**.

Finally, thanks to all of Morgan's Deans, Faculty, and Administrators for the collective support throughout the year.

About Us

The Office of State and Federal Relations works directly with the University's administration, faculty, and staff as the primary liaison to our federal and state governments. The Office works with Congress, federal agencies, and elected officials at the state and local jurisdictions to leverage resources to significantly elevate the University's impact in our nation's capital and in the State of Maryland.

Morgan Hosts Five U.S. Secretaries

SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Gina Raimondo

FRIDAY
February 11, 2022



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

Christine Wormuth

WEDNESDAY
February 23, 2022



SECRETARY OF TRADE

Katherine Tai

MONDAY
February 28, 2022





UNDER-SECRETARY OF
EDUCATION

James Kvaal

MONDAY
March 28, 2022



SECRETARY OF
TRANSPORTATION

Pete Buttigieg

WEDNESDAY
April 20, 2022



Buttigieg visits Morgan State University

by Morgan State U
APRIL 21, 2022

U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg toured one of Morgan State University's trailblazing research facilities Wednesday.

During his visit, which also included a town hall in the school's Center for the Built Environment and Infrastructure Studies, Buttigieg tested, among other things, Maryland's only driving simulator that took him from I-95 to the Baltimore Convention Center. The program is being used to study things such as reaction times and human-computer interaction.

The projects he tested all play a key role in what he said is the future of transportation infrastructure.

"We have to open our imagination about what transportation even means, what transit even means, the difference between mobility and owning a vehicle, and how those things interact with each other," Buttigieg said.

All the technology is being developed in the Urban Mobility and Equity Center within the school's National Transportation Center. Morgan State is one of 35 universities in the country to house one of these centers, a partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation. It is one of only two historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to serve as "leads," playing home base to consortiums with other area schools.

Buttigieg said President Joe Biden's administration is looking to strengthen partnerships with HBCUs; he said Biden has issued an executive order to ensure that all departments are doing a better



job of connecting with members of the community.

"We're proud of things like the partnership with Morgan State, and we need to have a whole lot more where this came from," Buttigieg said, "What does it actually look like? Well, first of all, it's funding for research; it's making sure that federal dollars continue to be available for the kind of work that's happening here. And that needs to grow, and it is growing as part of this infrastructure law."

He also said with the passage of the \$1 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act last year, transportation innovation is at a turning point.

"The obstacles are many, but we've just torn down one of them, which is not having any funding."

Buttigieg said, "We're living through a period of extraordinary change in technology, some of the technologies that are being developed and managed right here."

Morgan State University President David K. Wilson told WYPR Sec. Buttigieg's visit was special because he understands the importance of research and innovation.

"He understands the equity piece and the centrality of Morgan State University in advancing that within the U.S. Department

of Transportation. And so we're just

thrilled that this is not a drive-by for him, but he is here for a substantive period of time."

Wilson said the visit was equally important to Baltimore as a whole.

"This is the third or fourth time in the last few months that Sec. Buttigieg has been to Baltimore, and I think he understands all too well that Baltimore is a perfect laboratory for investing in transportation and climate, and, of course, in equity."

Earlier this month, U.S. Senators Chris Van Hollen and Ben Cardin together with the Democrats in Maryland's Congressional delegation announced more than \$409 million in federal funding over the next five years to improve roads, and bridges, and create jobs across the state.





Morgan Responds to Maryland Legislative Bills

The 2022 Maryland Legislative Session was held January 12, 2022 - May 11, 2022. For details about the bills, visit <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite> to search using bill numbers.

Bill Number	Bill Title	Morgan's Response
HB 0458 / SB 0472	State Personnel - Collective Bargaining - Revisions and Budget Bill Appropriations	Unfavorable
HB 0598 / SB 0540	Higher Education - Transfer Platform - Established (Transfer With Success Act 2.0)	Favorable
HB 0751 / SB 0118	State Personnel - Collective Bargaining	Unfavorable
HB 0780	Gun-Free Higher Education Zones	Favorable
HB 0799	State and Local Government - COVID-19 - Vaccination by Choice Act	Favorable with Amendments
HB 0966	Higher Education - Academic Credit for Prior Learning Examinations Policies and Procedures	Favorable
HB 1098 / SB 0832	Public Institutions of Higher Education - Students With Chronic Health Conditions - Case Manager	Favorable with Amendments
HB 1256	Education - Discriminatory Concepts in Instruction - Prohibition (Ending Discrimination in Public Education Act of 2022)	Unfavorable
HB 1400	Morgan State University - Increasing Bond Principal Amount	Favorable
HB 1444	Income Tax Credit - Endowments of Maryland Historically Black Colleges - Sunset Repeal	Favorable
SB 0152	Public Institutions of Higher Education - Transcript Requests by Students With Unpaid Student Account Balances	Favorable with Amendments
SB 0841	Morgan State University - Carnegie Classification - Doctoral University with Very High Research Activity	Favorable

Federal Legislation Impacting HBCUs

To provide an overview of key updates on recent Congressional and Executive Branch actions related to appropriations, defense authorization, Pell grants, loan forgiveness, and HBCUs. **(Clark Hill)**

FY23 APPROPRIATIONS

The House is in the process of preparing votes on its FY23 appropriations bills. The Senate Appropriations Committee will likely post, but not markup, their appropriations bills at the end of July, so it remains to be seen how the provisions relevant to HBCUs will do on the Senate side.

Some highlights from the House appropriations bills include:

Commerce, Justice, and Science

NOAA Aquaculture: \$14.5M (same as FY22)

NSF Excellence in Research: \$26M (\$4M over FY22)

Earmark for Morgan: \$2M for NIST AI lab.

Department of Defense

DoD Centers of Excellence: Report language encouraging DoD to work in partnership with HBCUs/MSIs to establish additional centers of excellence aligned to the National Defense Strategy and Research and Engineering STEM priorities. HBCU defense funding line increase: \$100.5M (\$67.2M over PBR)

Department of Education

Tech Access and Engagement: Report language encourages the Department to provide priority to HBCUs and MSIs and applicants seeking to implement or scale technology-enabled learning experiences in K–12 schools.

Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities: \$402.6M for the program HEERF: Report language requesting the Department of Education use the broadest possible interpretation of allowable uses of funds when evaluating applications for grants awarded under the HEERF program. HBCU Capital Financing: \$20.7M

Department of Energy

Vehicle Technologies Workforce Development: DOE is encouraged to engage with the electric industry; auto industry; labor unions; university and community colleges, including Historically Black Colleges and University and other Minority Serving Institutions; and training institutes to advance a national electric vehicle workforce.

Financial Services and General Government

HBCU records digitization: \$3M for the National Historical Publications and Records Commission to implement a new grants program to preserve and digitize the records of the creation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Housing research: \$20M for cooperative agreements and research partnerships with historically black colleges and universities and hispanic serving institutions.

State, Foreign Ops

State exchange program: At least \$4M for State Department to expand two-way international academic and professional and cultural exchanges for individuals of African descent, including the development of partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and Minority Serving Institutions (MSI).

Department of Transportation

Autonomous vehicles: Report language encourages DOT to evaluate the opinions, perspectives, and needs of communities of color as it pertains to AV adoption, including passenger and package delivery vehicles, in partnership with accredited universities of higher education, including historically black colleges or universities (HBCUs), and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), or consortia thereof.

There are also numerous provisions about encouraging agencies to work with HBCUs to expand diversity across federal agencies.

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

The House FY23 National Defense Authorization Act included the HBCU Rise Act, Morgan's legislation to help HBCU's achieve very high research activity status. While the language was not included in the Senate's version of the NDAA, it could potentially be added as an amendment or included through the conference process.

PELL GRANTS

President Joe Biden's FY23 budget request includes a proposal to increase the maximum Pell Grant by \$2,175 over its current level, bringing the maximum annual amount to \$8,670. The number of low- and middle-income students eligible to receive Pell grants would increase to about 6.7 million people, up from the approximately 6.1 million who are eligible currently. The budget proposal also includes doubling the maximum Pell Grant by 2029.

The House Appropriations Committee recommended an increase in the maximum Pell Grant by \$500 over the fiscal year 2022 enacted level, from \$6,895 to \$7,395. This is \$1,275 less than the budget request.

It remains to be seen how the Senate Appropriations Committee will respond to Biden's budget request on pell grants.

STUDENT LOANS

Loan Forgiveness

The White House has not yet made any announcements about what they will do with President Joe Biden's drafted executive order, but we are potentially weeks away from an announcement from President Biden given that federal student loan payments will restart on September 1. In the meantime, the Biden Administration is ramping up their efforts to encourage eligible borrowers to apply for the expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) initiative, which expires on October 31.

Student Loan Interest Proposed Rule

A new rule proposed by the Education Department on July 6 could transform the way student loan interest is capitalized. Interest capitalization is a lesser-known student loan mechanism that occurs when a loan, while in a grace period such as deferment or an income-driven repayment plan, continues to accrue interest that's then added to the principal balance.

This results in the loan's interest rate being applied to an ever-growing principal balance, something the Department of Education wants to change. ED has proposed eliminating capitalization when a borrower enters repayment, exits forbearance, defaults on a student loan or, exits most income-driven repayment plans, saying it will "help borrowers who struggle to repay their loans."

However, the proposed rule states there will still be instances in which interest capitalization can occur, as

required within the Higher Education Act. The comment period for the proposed rule closes August 12.

Lawmakers are pushing for further reform. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT) in June proposed a bill that would make it possible for student debt holders to refinance their loans at zero percent interest.

HBCUs

Social Infrastructure Bill

While the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law/IIJA had multiple opportunities for universities, many of the funding opportunities specific to HBCUs were in the Build Back Better (BBB) reconciliation bill, which was more focused on "social infrastructure." Unfortunately, intraparty negotiations on the bill were ultimately unsuccessful in the Senate for the BBB bill the House passed in November 2021.

Democrats resumed discussions in May on what a scaled-back version of the bill would look like, but the legislation now appears to be even more slimmed down than expected due to Sen. Joe Manchin's (D-WV) stance that he won't be supportive of a larger package until he has more data on inflation. As a result, President Joe Biden last week called on Congress to pass legislation before the August recess that would lower prescription drug costs for older Americans and extend Obamacare subsidies.

This will likely be the scope of the next reconciliation bill given Sen. Manchin's comments that he is not ready to support climate and energy provisions due to the current inflation situation. The new package, nicknamed "Build Back Manchin," is likely to undergo a review by the Senate Parliamentarian to make sure its text passes procedural muster. A final vote on the measure is not expected until very late this month or in early August due to the procedural requirements using Budget Reconciliation.

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