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Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards' Amendment Adopted To Track Participation by Minorities in Federally Sponsored STEM Programs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 29, 2009

Washington, D.C. – Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (D-MD) today offered an amendment adopted to the STEM Education Coordination Act of 2009, H.R. 1709, which passed the House Science and Technology Committee by a voice vote. The amendment requires a committee, created in the bill, to establish, update, and maintain an inventory of the participation by underrepresented minorities in federally sponsored STEM programs and activities. This amendment will provide Congress with solid and up-to-date information on minority participation.

"I am proud to offer an amendment that will examine the steps we need to take in order to increase minority student participation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics," said Rep. Edwards. "Once we receive this information, we can better assess the steps necessary to increase minority participation in these programs. We must be intentional in our efforts to ensure that all our young people are competitive with the rest of the world in the 21st century economy."

According to a report from the National Action Council for Minorities in Engineering (NACME), the number of minority students pursuing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) degrees and careers has leveled out or even declined in recent years. The report noted that the percentage of bachelor's degrees in engineering awarded to African American students declined significantly from 1995 to 2005, from 3.3 percent to 2.5 percent. In addition, while three key underrepresented minority (URM) groups--African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans--constitute some 30 percent of the overall undergraduate student population in the United States, they receive only about 12 percent of the degrees awarded in engineering.

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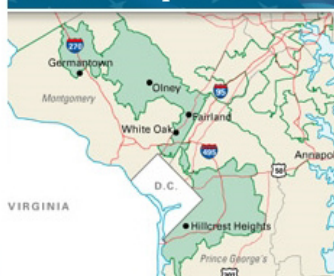


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Kids Corner





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