

## **BACKGROUND MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Out-of-Town Pool

**FROM:** White House Press Office

**DATE:** April 14, 2022

**RE:** Background on the Bipartisan Innovation Act and HBCUs for President Biden's Visit to Greensboro, North Carolina

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### **The President's Manufacturing Agenda**

The economy has created 7.9 million jobs since the President took office, more jobs in the first 14 months of any President's term ever. During the President's first year in office, the economy added 367,000 manufacturing jobs—the most in nearly 30 years. President Biden's first year in office saw historic private investments in manufacturing. For example, auto manufacturers announced more than \$100 billion in U.S. investments to build electric vehicles and batteries. That includes an announcement by Toyota last December of a \$1.3 billion investment in Greensboro to build an electric battery manufacturing plant.

### **Greensboro, North Carolina**

Greensboro is an example of a regional manufacturing ecosystem that the President's agenda seeks to build across America to create a globally competitive manufacturing industry that also expands the middle class. These ecosystems require the co-location of feedback loops between researchers and industry, public-private partnerships to produce an inclusive and skilled workforce, and a supply chain of small and medium sized manufacturers. The Bipartisan Innovation Act would offer the sustained funding places like Greensboro need to accelerate their ability to convert this potential into job creation and business growth.

### **North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (N.C. A&T)**

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University is the nation's largest HBCU, enrolling over 13,000 students across both undergraduate and graduate programs, and helps support economic growth across the Piedmont Triad/Carolina Core region and in the State. According to the University's estimates, they return \$16 for every \$1 of State appropriations invested in them, have over \$1 billion in economic output, and support almost 12,000 jobs across the State. They graduate the highest number of African American engineers of any university nationwide and receiving over \$70 million in new State and Federal research grants last year. The Administration provided over \$5 billion in additional funding to HBCUs through the American Rescue Plan and other sources last year. It is also working to increase Pell grants to support students attending 2-year and 4-year colleges.

## **Bipartisan Innovation Act**

In the President's remarks, he will highlight provisions of the Bipartisan Innovation Act key to retaining and strengthening our innovation and manufacturing capacity, as well as investing in STEM education and equity.

### **Research & Development (R&D) and Equitable STEM Education**

The Bipartisan Innovation Act creates a new Directorate at the National Science Foundation to focus on critical technologies and technology commercialization, in areas linked to U.S. competitiveness. This includes advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence and quantum computing. The bill will take steps to improve equity in STEM education and in the distribution of R&D funding. This includes requiring agencies to collect detailed demographic data during the grant review process and on STEM faculty and to eliminate institutional and cultural barriers to the retention, recruitment, and advancement of women and members of other underrepresented groups in STEM.

### **Manufacturing and Regional Development**

The Bipartisan Innovation Act reauthorizes and expands the Manufacturing Extension Partnership and Manufacturing USA Innovation Institutes, the country's two nationwide manufacturing investments networks. It also supports the creation of a new Regional Technology Hub program at the Department of Commerce that will offer 5-year funding to support regional partnerships organized to grow technology-focused critical industries that advance our global competitiveness. This program is ideal for communities like Greensboro, which have an existing research and industrial base and skilled workforce that could be reoriented from declining industries (like textiles) towards growing industries (like clean energy manufacturing).

## **Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)**

Since taking office, the Biden-Harris Administration has provided \$5.8 billion in funding to HBCUs through the Department of Education. This included emergency aid that helped HBCUs and their students mitigate the negative impact of COVID by supporting students' basic needs, campus operations, and avoiding mass faculty and staff lay-offs. The funding also discharged approximately \$1.6 billion of capital improvement debt held by HBCUs. This resulted in debt relief for 45 HBCUs. Finally, the Department of Education awarded more than \$500 million in grant funding to HBCUs using FY21 appropriations to support academic programs and fiscal stability.

N.C. A&T has received \$188 million in funding from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund—including \$93 million from the American Rescue Plan, one of the largest single infusions of Federal funds to N.C. A&T in history. They are using the funding to fund scholarships and emergency aid to reduce student's bills. Scholarship programs include need-based aid, scholarships to graduate students, including those who left the University before completing their degrees, and price breaks for students on campus and with meal plans.