

Union Calendar No. 4

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 144

[Report No. 117-16]

To forestall the loss of research talent by establishing a temporary early career research fellowship program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 4, 2021

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas (for herself and Mr. LUCAS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

APRIL 14, 2021

Additional sponsors: Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. LAMB, Mr. GARCIA of California, Mrs. KIRKPATRICK, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PERLMUTTER, Mr. BEYER, Ms. ROSS, Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio, Ms. WILD, Mr. WEBER of Texas, Mr. WALTZ, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Ms. HOULAHAN, Mr. FEENSTRA, Mr. BOWMAN, Mrs. FLETCHER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. KILDEE, Mrs. BICE of Oklahoma, Mr. FOSTER, Mr. CASE, Mr. MELJER, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. BAIRD, and Mrs. KIM of California

APRIL 14, 2021

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on January 4, 2021]

A BILL

To forestall the loss of research talent by establishing a temporary early career research fellowship program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Supporting Early-Ca-*
5 *reer Researchers Act”.*

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 *Congress finds the following:*

8 *(1) The Nation’s universities and industrial re-*
9 *search labs are facing unprecedented budget pressure*
10 *as part of the COVID–19 health crisis, resulting in*
11 *considerably fewer openings for research and teaching*
12 *positions.*

13 *(2) Emergency funding is needed to forestall the*
14 *loss of research talent likely to occur if early-career*
15 *researchers are forced to seek employment outside of*
16 *research due to the sharp economic decline caused by*
17 *the COVID–19 health crisis.*

18 *(3) The future of America’s defense will rely on*
19 *advanced technologies to maintain its military supe-*
20 *riority over its rivals, including China. These tech-*
21 *nologies will require new levels of scientific and engi-*
22 *neering aptitude and understanding. Early career re-*
23 *searchers will play a critical role in the development*
24 *of these technologies, and the loss of an entire genera-*
25 *tion of researchers due to the COVID–19 pandemic*

1 *will be detrimental to the United States national se-*
2 *curity.*

3 **SEC. 3. EARLY-CAREER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM.**

4 (a) *IN GENERAL.*—*The Director of the National*
5 *Science Foundation may establish a 2-year pilot program*
6 *to award grants to highly qualified early-career investiga-*
7 *tors to carry out an independent research program at the*
8 *qualified institution of higher education chosen by such in-*
9 *vestigator, to last for a period not greater than 2 years.*

10 (b) *SELECTION PROCESS.*—*The Director of the Na-*
11 *tional Science Foundation shall select grantees under sub-*
12 *section (a) from among citizens, nationals, and lawfully ad-*
13 *mitted permanent resident aliens of the United States.*

14 (c) *OUTREACH.*—*The Director shall conduct program*
15 *outreach to recruit fellowship applicants—*

16 (1) *from all regions of the country;*

17 (2) *from historically underrepresented popu-*
18 *lations in the fields of science, technology, engineer-*
19 *ing, and mathematics; and*

20 (3) *who graduate from or intend to carry out re-*
21 *search at a variety of types of institutions of higher*
22 *education, including—*

23 (A) *Historically Black Colleges and Univer-*
24 *sities;*

25 (B) *Hispanic-Serving Institutions;*

1 (C) *Tribal Colleges and Universities; and*
2 (D) *institutions of higher education that are*
3 *not among the top 50 institutions in annual*
4 *Federal funding for research.*

5 (d) *SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.*—*The Director shall give*
6 *special consideration to an application from an individual*
7 *who graduated from or is intending to carry out research*
8 *at an institution of the type listed in subsection (c)(3).*

9 (e) *REPORT.*—*Not later than 90 days after the conclu-*
10 *sion of the second year of the pilot program, the Director*
11 *shall submit a report to Congress that includes—*

12 (1) *statistical summary data on fellowship*
13 *awardees disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender,*
14 *age, years since completion of doctoral degree, and in-*
15 *stitution type;*

16 (2) *an assessment, drawing on feedback from the*
17 *research community and other sources of information,*
18 *of the effectiveness of the pilot program for mitigating*
19 *the loss of research talent due to the pandemic; and*

20 (3) *if determined effective, a plan for permanent*
21 *implementation of the pilot program.*

22 (f) *QUALIFIED INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION*
23 *DEFINED.*—*The term “qualified institution of higher edu-*
24 *cation” means an institution of higher education (as de-*
25 *fin ed in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965*

1 *(20 U.S.C. 1001)) that is inside the United States or a ter-*
2 *ritory of the United States.*

3 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 *There is authorized to be appropriated to the Director*
5 *of the National Science Foundation \$250,000,000 for each*
6 *of fiscal years 2021 through 2022 to carry out the activities*
7 *in this Act.*

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