

At a Glance

H.R. 4372, MSI STEM Achievement Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology on September 25, 2019

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2020	2020-2024	2020-2029
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	0	0
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	3	414	not estimated
Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply?	No	Mandate Effects	
Increases on-budget deficits in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2030?	No	Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No

The bill would

- Authorize the appropriation of \$900 million over the 2020-2024 period for the National Science Foundation to award grants to improve the capacity of minority-serving institutions of higher education to educate and train students in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

Estimated budgetary effects would primarily stem from

- Spending of the authorized appropriations

Detailed estimate begins on the next page.

Bill Summary

H.R. 4372 would authorize the appropriation of \$900 million over the 2020-2024 period for the National Science Foundation (NSF) to award grants to improve the capacity of minority-serving institutions (MSIs) of higher education—including historically black colleges and universities and tribal colleges and universities—to educate and train students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.

The bill also would direct the Office of Science and Technology Policy to develop a uniform set of policy guidelines and a strategic plan for certain federal agencies to improve outreach to MSIs and to increase the capacity of MSIs to compete for federal grants and participate in federal programs. Finally, the bill would require the Government Accountability Office to develop an inventory of federal funding programs targeted toward MSIs.

Estimated Federal Cost

The estimated budgetary effect of H.R. 4372 is shown in Table 1. The costs of the legislation fall primarily within budget function 250 (general science, space, and technology).

Table 1.
Estimated Increases in Spending Subject to Appropriation Under H.R. 4372

	By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars					2020-2024
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
National Science Foundation						
Authorization ^a	14	175	180	185	190	744
Estimated Outlays	2	26	86	133	162	409
Other Activities						
Estimated Authorization	1	1	1	1	1	5
Estimated Outlays	1	1	1	1	1	5
Total Changes						
Estimated Authorization	15	176	181	186	191	749
Estimated Outlays	3	27	87	134	163	414

a. H.R. 4372 would authorize the appropriation of \$170 million in 2020 for the National Science Foundation (NSF) to award grants. However, using information from the NSF, CBO estimates that \$156 million has been allocated on an annualized basis from funds made available under the continuing resolution (Public Law 116-59), which provided appropriations through November 21, 2019. Thus, the estimated authorization for 2020 (\$14 million) is equal to the specified amount (\$170 million) minus the annualized amount from the continuing resolution (\$156 million).

Basis of Estimate

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the legislation will be enacted in early 2020 and that the authorized and necessary amounts will be provided in each year. CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4372 would cost \$414 million over the 2020-2024 period.

National Science Foundation

Section 4 of the bill would authorize the appropriation of \$170 million in 2020 and a total of \$900 million over the 2020-2024 period for the NSF to award grants to improve the capacity of MSIs to educate and train students in STEM fields. In 2019, the NSF allocated \$156 million for those purposes. Because CBO scores continuing resolutions on an annualized basis, in 2020 CBO assumes that the NSF will allocate the same amount from funds made available under the current continuing resolution (Public Law 116-59). As a result, CBO estimates that H.R. 4372 would authorize an increase in spending subject to appropriation in 2020 of \$14 million, the difference between the authorized amount and the annualized amount under the continuing resolution. Based on historical spending patterns for the affected grants, CBO estimates that implementing section 4 would cost \$409 million over the 2020-2024 period and \$335 million after 2024.

Other Activities

Section 5 of the bill would direct the Office of Science and Technology Policy to develop a uniform set of policy guidelines and a strategic plan for certain federal agencies to improve outreach to MSIs and to increase the capacity of MSIs to compete for federal grants and participate in federal programs. CBO expects that six agencies with research expenditures exceeding \$100 million annually—the Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Energy, and Health and Human Services, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the NSF—would be subject to the policy guidelines. Some of those agencies are already conducting activities to improve outreach to MSIs. On that basis, and considering the costs of similar tasks, CBO estimates that implementing section 5 would cost \$1 million annually over the 2020-2024 period.

Section 3 of the bill would require the Government Accountability Office to develop an inventory of federal funding programs targeted toward MSIs. Based on the costs of similar tasks, CBO estimates that implementing the provision would cost less than \$500,000; any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

Pay-As-You-Go Considerations: None.

Increase in Long-Term Deficits: None.

Mandates: None.

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