

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 162

To establish a scholarship program in the Department of State for Haitian students whose studies were interrupted as a result of the January 12, 2010, earthquake, or the October 2016 hurricane, Hurricane Matthew.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 3, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To establish a scholarship program in the Department of State for Haitian students whose studies were interrupted as a result of the January 12, 2010, earthquake, or the October 2016 hurricane, Hurricane Matthew.

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 “Haitian Educational
5 Empowerment Act of 2017”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) On October 4, 2016, Hurricane Matthew
2 devastated Haiti, killing over 1,000 people, and di-
3 rectly affected 2.1 million people, including the in-
4 ternal displacement of 175,000 and 1.4 million peo-
5 ple in need of urgent humanitarian aid.

6 (2) The storm damage has been estimated to be
7 \$1,000,000,000, or about 11.4 percent of the gross
8 domestic product of Haiti.

9 (3) Hurricane Matthew was the worst hurricane
10 to hit Haiti in over 50 years.

11 (4) Haiti is the poorest country in the Western
12 Hemisphere.

13 (5) Eighty percent of the population lives below
14 the poverty line, and approximately 45 percent of
15 the population is illiterate.

16 (6) On January 12, 2010, a 7.0-magnitude
17 earthquake struck the country of Haiti.

18 (7) The earthquake caused massive devastation
19 across Haiti, destroying government buildings, hos-
20 pitals, schools, and vital aid offices, including the
21 headquarters of the United Nations mission to
22 Haiti.

23 (8) An estimated three million people were di-
24 rectly affected by the earthquake in Haiti, nearly
25 one-third of the country's population.

1 (9) Many universities suffered significant struc-
2 tural damage, including the State University of
3 Haiti, the country's main public university, which
4 had 80 percent of its buildings destroyed.

5 (10) The earthquake claimed the lives of many
6 students and several prominent academics.

7 (11) Before the earthquake, at least 85 percent
8 of Haitians with a university degree left the island.

9 (12) A more highly educated population is vital
10 to Haiti's long-term development.

11 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR**
12 **CERTAIN HAITIAN STUDENTS.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, acting
14 through the Assistant Secretary of State for Educational
15 and Cultural Affairs, shall establish a scholarship program
16 for Haitian students whose studies were interrupted as a
17 result of the January 12, 2010, earthquake or the October
18 4, 2016, hurricane, Hurricane Matthew.

19 (b) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a scholar-
20 ship under this section, a Haitian undergraduate or grad-
21 uate student shall—

22 (1) have been enrolled as a full-time student in
23 a Haitian university or institution of higher edu-
24 cation in the United States at the time of the Janu-

1 ary 12, 2010, earthquake or when Hurricane Mat-
2 thew hit Haiti on October 4, 2016; and

3 (2) submit to the Assistant Secretary of State
4 for Educational and Cultural Affairs an application
5 at such time, in such manner, and containing such
6 information as the Assistant Secretary may require.

7 (c) DURATION.—A scholarship under this section
8 shall be awarded to a Haitian student for one academic
9 year and may be renewed in accordance with subsection
10 (d).

11 (d) RENEWAL.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—A scholarship awarded
13 under this section may be renewed for an additional
14 academic year upon demonstration to the Secretary
15 of State of satisfactory academic achievement in the
16 prior academic year.

17 (2) MAXIMUM RENEWALS.—A scholarship
18 awarded under this section may not be renewed for
19 more than six academic years.

20 (e) PREFERENCE.—Preference in the awarding of
21 scholarships shall be given to the following categories of
22 Haitian students:

23 (1) Haitian students who are studying subjects
24 of importance to Haiti's long-term social, economic,
25 or political development.

1 (2) Haitian students who were enrolled in pro-
2 grams that were forced to cease operations as a re-
3 sult of the January 12, 2010, earthquake or the Oc-
4 tober 4, 2016, hurricane, Hurricane Matthew.

5 (f) RETURN.—Upon completion of an undergraduate
6 or graduate degree at an institution of higher education,
7 a Haitian student who has received a scholarship under
8 this section shall return to Haiti.

9 (g) SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT.—A scholarship awarded
10 to a Haitian student under this section may not exceed
11 an amount equal to the total costs related to the tuition
12 and fees for one academic year at an institution of higher
13 education in which the student is enrolled as a full-time
14 student.

15 **SEC. 4. GRANTS TO UNITED STATES COLLEGES AND UNI-**
16 **VERSITIES.**

17 The Secretary of State, acting through the Assistant
18 Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs,
19 may make grants to institutions of higher education that
20 have enrolled a significant number of Haitian students
21 who have been enrolled as full-time students in a Haitian
22 university at the time of the January 12, 2010, earth-
23 quake or the October 4, 2016, hurricane, Hurricane Mat-
24 thew. Such grants shall be used to provide social and edu-
25 cational support services to such students.

1 **SEC. 5. DEFINITIONS.**

2 For purposes of this Act:

3 (1) FEES.—The term “fees” means—

4 (A) fees normally assessed a full-time stu-
5 dent, as determined by an institution of higher
6 education, including—

7 (i) costs for the rental or purchase of
8 any equipment, materials, or supplies re-
9 quired of all students in the same course
10 of study; and

11 (ii) an allowance for room and board
12 at such institution; and

13 (B) travel expenses to such institution
14 from Haiti and, upon the completion of a de-
15 gree at such institution, from such institution
16 to Haiti.

17 (2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
18 term “institution of higher education” has the
19 meaning given such term in section 101 of the High-
20 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

21 (3) SCHOLARSHIP.—The term “scholarship”
22 means an amount awarded to a Haitian student
23 under this section that shall only be used to pay
24 costs related to the tuition and fees at the institu-

- 1 tion of higher education in which the student is en-
- 2 rolled as a full-time student.

