

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 18, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
House Appropriations Committee
H-307 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I am requesting funding for the HBCU Digital Modernization and AI Readiness Project in Fiscal Year 2027. The entity to receive funding for this project is Spelman College, located at 350 Spelman Lane in Atlanta GA, 30310.

The funding would be used to transform undergraduate computing education through AI integration, increasing STEM success and workforce readiness in Georgia. This investment addresses a growing shortage of qualified computing and AI professionals in Georgia and the broader United States, helping ensure that students trained at a public university enter the workforce with relevant and competitive skills. By improving STEM completion rates and expanding research opportunities, the project strengthens the public return on investment by producing highly skilled graduates who contribute to the economy, innovation ecosystem, and workforce development. The project will contribute to workforce development in metro Atlanta and the state of Georgia by increasing the number of students graduating with computing and artificial intelligence competencies. By improving educational outcomes in computing courses and expanding undergraduate research opportunities, the initiative will help produce more job-ready graduates prepared for careers in software development, data science, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and other high-demand technology fields.

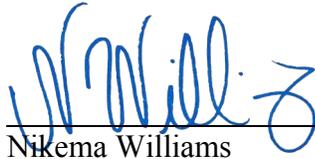
The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because as an HBCU, Spelman faces the same pressures confronting higher education nationally, rapid advances in artificial intelligence, increasing data security requirements, heightened accessibility standards, and growing expectations for digital communication and emergency preparedness. Without coordinated infrastructure investment, these needs are often addressed piecemeal, limiting impact and increasing long-term costs. This project provides a strategic opportunity to modernize foundational systems in a unified, scalable manner that positions Spelman to meet federal, workforce, and compliance expectations. Spelman will use the NIST measurement standards to measure the impact of this investment.

The project has a federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by section 272 of title 15, United States Code.

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress