

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.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 3, 2017

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

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## 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.

