

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the College Cost Reduction Act and the rule which makes in order the manager's amendment to the bill. I would like to thank Chairman *Miller* and Subcommittee Chairman *Hinojosa* for their work on this bill.

We know that higher education is crucial, not only to the individual but also to our Nation. We know, for example, that the more you learn, the more you earn. We know that those who are in college are much less likely to be involved with welfare, much less likely to be involved in crime. Education is critical for our national economy. We know that the economic future of the United States depends on the success of our higher education policy.

We live in a high-tech, high-information economy, so the number of college students that we have will be an important economic resource. We can't afford to have any of our children fail to achieve full potential because they were not able to afford to go to college.

There are many improvements in the bill. The cost of education through student loans will be made more affordable. There are significant increases in Pell Grants. One of the major increases, the first in the last 4 years, \$500 over the next 4 years, will be the increase in the maximum Pell Grant award. We know this is critical, because in the last 6 years, the cost of college education has gone up about 55 percent, but in the last 4 years, the Pell Grant didn't go up at all.

This bill makes significant investments in Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other minority-serving institutions. A significant portion of the students at these colleges and universities are first-generation students. We know they often come from low-income families, so support of these institutions is critical. We know that these colleges offer an opportunity that otherwise would not be there.

This bill also makes improvements in Upward Bound. It provides additional funds for Upward Bound because many qualified Upward Bound programs were not funded this year because the program just ran out of money. Upward Bound focuses on those who have the potential to go to

college but may not, just because they don't think they are expected to go to college. This bill makes critical improvements in the Upward Bound program and makes sure that those qualified programs can get funded.

Mr. Speaker, the College Cost Reduction Act will reduce the cost of going to college. It will enable many to go to college that otherwise could not have afforded to go to college. Chairman *Miller*'s amendment makes improvements to the bill, and therefore I support the rule and support the bill and urge my colleagues to do the same.