



Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF 116TH CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

House of Representatives

Representative Robin L. Kelly
October 30, 2020
Congressional Record Submission

Madam Speaker, I rise today for myself and Members of the Illinois delegation to speak about Northern Illinois University, my alma mater and a major contributor to the life, health and future of the Midwest and beyond.

This year, NIU celebrates its 125th anniversary, and I ask that this congratulatory message be read into the Congressional Record in honor of this significant milestone.

Like so many state universities across our great country, NIU began as a “normal school,” or teachers college. In the late 1800s, 11 million people had moved from farms to cities, and our country had welcomed 25 million new immigrants. The need for better access to education was exceeded only by the need for more teachers – and schools like NIU were created to meet those needs.

From the beginning, NIU has been an institution committed to providing opportunity for underserved students – students who are the first in their families to attend college, students of color and students with high financial need. Today nearly 75 percent of NIU students fall into one or more of those categories, with about 45% Pell grant-eligible, 50% students of color and 50% first generation college students.

At the same time, NIU excels in the creation and dissemination of new knowledge. In 2017, the Brookings Institution gave NIU high rankings for excellence at the intersection of research accomplishments and the creation of social mobility for students exposed to hands-on research and other opportunities they might not otherwise experience.

NIU faculty are not only great teachers, but many are world-renowned scientists, authors, and policy experts. They study climate change, look for ways to improve physical and mental health, create fuel-saving vehicles, expand the boundaries of visual and performance art, explore ancient and modern cultures and much more. A host of federal agencies have expressed confidence in NIU through grant awards for study of such diverse areas as Southeast Asian languages and cultures, assistive technologies for people who are blind or visually impaired, and new devices for the Department of Homeland Security to keep air travel safe.

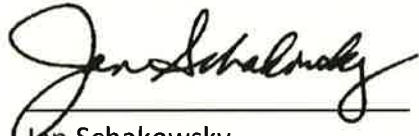
Nearly 250,000 alumni in the northern Illinois region and around the world are making a difference in their chosen fields. The impact of this outstanding institution has earned the respect and attention of a grateful state and nation. As a proud alumna, I am honored to join my colleagues to congratulate Northern Illinois University on this, its 125th anniversary.



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



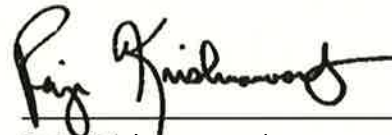
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Member of Congress



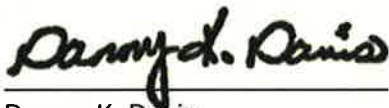
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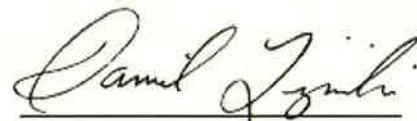
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