

COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Promoting U.S. Global Competence

May 28, 2019

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 136
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 156
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

The undersigned organizations express deep appreciation to the subcommittee for preserving the U.S. Department of Education's important historical role in international education. As you draft the subcommittee's FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, **we urge \$106.1 million in funding for International Education and Foreign Language Studies, including \$95.7 million for HEA-Title VI and \$10.4 million for Fulbright-Hays programs.** Due to severe budget limitations in FY 2011, these programs sustained a 43% reduction that has not been replenished or kept pace with inflation. Our request would begin restoring the programs to their FY 2010 levels and build on the progress made to this critical international education infrastructure during the decade after 9-11.

The nation's security, its economic growth, and its success in confronting global challenges hinge on our ability to engage with diverse cultures at home and around the globe. Multiple GAO reports have cited shortfalls of language and culture skills in the U.S. military, diplomatic and intelligence communities, finding that this deficit could threaten our priorities and missions around the globe. At the same time, growing security challenges in other issue areas such as global health, environment, food production, cyber security, law enforcement and more, increasingly depend on international knowledge and skills. Meanwhile, U.S. corporations seek more graduates with international business skills, and language and cultural competencies to compete successfully in global markets.

While these well-documented demands for international skills and knowledge are growing by the day, our educational institutions must be better prepared to meet the challenges ahead. A 2017 Congressionally requested [*Report of the AAAS Commission on Language Learning in the U.S.*](#) recommended an increase in funding for Title VI and Fulbright-Hays to support a 21st century education strategy that "promotes broad access, values international competencies, and nurtures deep expertise in world languages and cultures."

As the foundation for internationalizing U.S. higher education, this federal-university partnership ensures our nation's educational capacity and deep knowledge about all world regions, international business, and over 200 foreign languages, and at all levels of education. Multiple federal agencies with complementary international education programs—such as the Departments of Defense, State,

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Commerce, and intelligence agencies—depend on the Title VI and Fulbright-Hays unique comprehensive infrastructure and resources to further their respective strategic goals. While the Department of Education works to ensure that their programs prioritize the targeted language and world regional resource needs of these agencies, the independent scholarship and diverse perspectives on world regions and international business that these programs enable are often sought by all branches of the federal government.

What's more, Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs expand access to underserved institutions of higher education and populations, provide high quality programs and resources for K-12 schools, and conduct extensive outreach to government and the private sector.

The proven federal catalytic role in international and foreign language education through Title VI and Fulbright-Hays continues to be an essential strategy for developing—in partnership with our educational institutions—the American capabilities and leadership needed for addressing our contemporary global challenges. We believe reinvesting in these programs is timely.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. We appreciate your continued support for these programs, and would be pleased to provide any further information the subcommittee may need.

Submitted by the following organizations:

African Studies Association
American Association of Community Colleges
American Council of Learned Societies
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
American Councils for International Education
American Historical Association
American Political Science Association
Association for Asian Studies
Association for International Business Education and Research
Association of International Education Administrators
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
Center for Global Education at Asia Society
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council of American Overseas Research Centers
Council of Directors of National Resource Centers
Council of Graduate Schools
The Forum on Education Abroad
Joint National Committee for Languages
Latin American Studies Association
Middle East Studies Association
Modern Language Association
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Coalition for History
National Council for Languages and International Studies
National Humanities Alliance
North American Small Business International Trade Educators Association
Social Science Research Council

cc: Members and Staff of the Senate Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies