

COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Promoting U.S. Global Competence

March 3, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human
Services, Education and related agencies
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

RE: FY 2017 Funding for International Education and Foreign Language Studies:
The Higher Education Act—Title VI and Fulbright-Hays 102(b)(6)

Dear Chairmen Cochran and Blunt and Ranking Members Mikulski and Murray:

The undersigned organizations appreciate your support for the U.S. Department of Education's international and foreign language education programs, especially in face of unprecedented global challenges to U.S. security and economic competitiveness. As you consider the Senate FY 2017 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies funding bill, we urge increased funding for these vital programs to **\$78.7 million, a \$6.5 million increase over the FY 2016 level**. This includes **\$70.1 million for Title VI**, \$5 million over FY 2016, and **\$8.6 for Fulbright-Hays**, \$1.5 million over FY 2016. We strongly believe our proposal would be a well-spent investment so fundamental to our national interest.

The President's FY 2017 budget proposes a \$1.3 billion increase in the Department of Education's overall discretionary spending, but does not live up to its commitment to international education and foreign language studies. Despite \$53 million (43%) in funding cuts for Title VI and Fulbright-Hays since FY 2011, the budget reduces these programs further by \$4.89 million or 6.8% below FY 2016. The budget holds Title VI to its FY 2016 funding level of \$65.1 million, and reduces the essential Fulbright-Hays overseas program by \$4.89 million or 69% below FY 2016. This request is clearly inadequate to addressing the nation's rapidly growing needs for graduates capable of meeting our global challenges.

Our attached detailed recommendations—**Education Initiative for Global Security and Competitiveness, FY 2017**—is a targeted initiative focusing on strengthening activities that 1) broaden opportunities for student participation in international, world regional and foreign language studies, and 2) contribute to strengthening U.S. human resource capabilities on strategic areas of the world that impact our national security and global economic competitiveness.

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Title VI and Fulbright-Hays have a strong impact on our nation by developing and maintaining a steady supply of graduates with deep expertise and high quality research on foreign languages and cultures, international markets, world regions and global issues that support our diplomatic, defense, commercial and educational interests, among an increasing number of other areas. At a time when our global challenges call for increased linguistic, regional and cultural competencies, renewed investment in these world-class, bipartisan programs is vital to America's future.

We thank you for your consideration of our views. We would be pleased to provide any further information the committee may need.

Submitted by the following organizations:

African Studies Association
Alliance for International Exchange
American Association of Community Colleges
American Council on Education
American Council of Learned Societies
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
American Councils for International Education
American Political Science Association
American University of Beirut
Asia Society
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
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council of American Overseas Research Centers
Council of Directors of National Resource Centers
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
UNCF

cc: Members and Staff of the Senate Appropriations Committee
Enc: Education Initiative for Global Security and Competitiveness, FY 2017

COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Promoting U.S. Global Competence

Education Initiative for Global Security and Competitiveness FY 2017

International Education and Foreign Language Studies HEA-Title VI/Fulbright-Hays (In Millions)

	FY 2010 Enacted	FY 2016 Enacted	FY 2017 Request	FY 2017 CIE Recommended
Title VI	\$110.31	\$65.10	\$65.10	\$70.15
Fulbright-Hays	<u>\$ 15.58</u>	<u>\$ 7.06</u>	<u>\$ 2.17</u>	<u>\$ 8.56</u>
TOTAL:	\$125.89	\$72.16	\$67.27	\$78.71

+\$11.44 M over request
+\$6.55 M (9%) over FY 2016
-\$47.18 M (-38%) below FY 2010

President's FY 2017 Request

President Obama's budget provides for a \$1.3 billion increase in the U.S. Department of Education's discretionary spending, but does not live up to its commitment to international education and foreign language studies. Despite \$53 million (43%) in funding cuts for Title VI/Fulbright-Hays since FY 2011, the budget holds Title VI to its FY 2016 funding level and reduces Fulbright-Hays—an essential overseas program supporting Title VI—by \$4.89 million or 69% below FY 2016. The Administration proposes that funding be used for continuation grants only. No new competitions would take place in FY 2017 for Title VI-UISFL or Fulbright Group Projects Abroad. Fulbright Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowships would be zeroed. This request is clearly inadequate to addressing the nation's rapidly growing needs for graduates capable of meeting our global challenges. We urge the Congress to reject the proposed reduction, and begin to replenish these vital programs.

Coalition for International Education Recommendation

The following recommendation for boosting Title VI/Fulbright-Hays funding by \$6.55 million in FY 2017 over the FY 2016 level focuses on strengthening activities that 1) broaden opportunities for student participation in international, world regional and foreign language studies, and 2) contribute to strengthening U.S. human resource capabilities on strategic areas of the world that impact our national security and global economic competitiveness.

Why Investing in Title VI and Fulbright-Hays Now is Important

- In December 2015, *The Washington Post* reported that “[t]op intelligence and national security officials—including the top general of NATO—have warned that the United States’ depth of knowledge and capacity for collecting information on Russia is not up to snuff, given the stakes of the conflicts at hand and the threat an unpredictable Kremlin poses to U.S. interests.”¹
- Recent reports and Congressional hearings have documented the growing unmet needs for Americans with strong language skills and regional expertise to enhance U.S. capabilities and readiness.²
- For example, a U.S. Department of Defense official reported in one hearing, “In FY 2011, over 81 percent (29,960) of our military positions identified as having language requirements were filled. However, only 28% (10,377) of the positions with language requirements were filled with personnel at *the required foreign language proficiency level*.”³
- Title VI and Fulbright-Hays are the federal government’s most comprehensive international education programs. They play a significant role in developing a steady supply of graduates with deep expertise and high quality research on foreign languages and cultures, international markets, world regions, and global issues.
- Failing to reinvest in Title VI/Fulbright-Hays today will further erode the world-class international educational and research capacity, especially in less commonly taught languages and world areas, that has been built over several decades and cannot be easily replaced once lost.

What Additional Funding of \$6.55 million Over FY 2016 Would Accomplish

Title VI– \$5.05 million over the FY 2016 level

- ***FLAS Fellowships: A \$2.2 million increase over the FY 2016 level to fund an additional 83 graduate academic year and 78 summer Foreign Language and Area Study (FLAS) fellowships.*** The Administration reduced FLAS funding and the number of FLAS fellowships in the FY 2014 grant competition by nearly \$5 million. This proposed increase would restore the number of FLAS fellowships to about 50% of the number funded in FY 2013. FLAS fellowships have been key incentives for producing our nation’s international world regional and foreign language expertise. What’s more, a 2008 study for the Department of Education found that an impressive 80% of graduating FLAS fellows were employed in positions that utilized expertise gained during their fellowships.⁴

¹ The Washington Post, “Lack of Russia Experts has some in U.S. worried,” Karoun Demirjian, December 30, 2015.

² Examples: [Consultation with Federal Agencies on Areas of National Need](#), U.S. Department of Education; [“2014 U.S. Business Needs for Employees with International Expertise;”](#) [“A National Security Crisis: Foreign Language Capabilities in the Federal Government, Committee on Homeland Security, May 21, 2012.”](#)

³ Op.Cit., “A National Security Crisis,” Testimony by Dr. Laura Junor, Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, U.S. Department of Defense, May 21, 2012, p. 3.

⁴ “A Study of Four Graduate Fellowship Programs,” Kraus, et.al, for the U.S. Department of Education, 2008, p. 45.

- ***NRCs: A \$1 million increase over the FY 2016 level to fund an increase in the number of intensive intermediate and advanced foreign language training opportunities in the strategic languages and world regions of national need⁵ provided by National Resource Centers (NRCs).*** The NRCs continue to serve as the foundation in the U.S. for developing our deep knowledge, resources and expertise on over 120 languages and all world regions of strategic importance. They are responsible for the vast majority of instruction of less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) in the U.S. This additional funding would enable the NRCs to increase the number of intensive intermediate and advanced foreign language training opportunities for students studying the strategic languages and world regions of national need, such as through collaborative summer institutes or other innovative means.
- ***CIBERs: An \$850,000 increase over the FY 2016 level to fund student project-based learning opportunities and internship programs in the private/public sectors by the Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBERs).*** This amount would provide additional funds to expand CIBER programs—conducted as collaborative projects of all 17 CIBERs—that provide students with real world experiential learning opportunities in corporations or organizations at home or abroad. These proven, CIBER–private/public partnership programs provide students with project-based consulting and internship programs that enable graduates to hit the ground running in the global economy, often leading to employment opportunities upon or immediately after graduation.
- ***LRCs: A \$500,000 increase over the FY 2016 level to fund the development of new, low-cost, easily accessible foreign language proficiency assessment instruments in languages of strategic need by the Language Resource Centers (LRCs).*** National capacity in critical languages depends on accurate assessment of individual proficiency through high-quality, valid proficiency tests. Significant gaps in coverage exist, in particular for heritage learners, younger learners, and newly emergent critical languages. The Language Resource Centers have deep capacity in developing a wide range of proficiency assessments in critical languages, and are able to undertake this task immediately.
- ***AORCs: A \$250,000 increase over the FY 2016 level to fund expanded fellowships for US scholars, training in critical languages and operational support for the American Overseas Research Centers (AORC).*** Consortia of colleges and universities maintain centers overseas—including in strategic world regions—to promote faculty and student scholarly exchanges for advanced training and research, including foreign language study that is vital to continued U.S. global competence. This additional amount would increase AORC services to all levels of the higher education community, including community colleges and minority serving institutions. The centers foster international education by facilitating the work of U.S. students and scholars conducting research in the host countries, sponsoring fellowship programs, foreign language teaching and study, library development, meetings and seminars, publications, field expeditions, and collaborative research projects.

⁵ As identified by the Secretary of Education’s Congressionally mandated annual survey of Federal agency Areas of National Need for expertise in foreign languages and world regions.

- ***UISFL: A \$250,000 increase over FY 2016 to fund additional projects to strengthen the undergraduate pipeline for underserved populations and institutions of higher education under the Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language (UISFL) program.*** The UISFL program has long been successful in stimulating sustainable undergraduate programs in world regional, international and foreign language studies at all types of institutions of higher education in the U.S. In recent years, the Department of Education has placed an emphasis on the UISFL program's ability to reach underserved institutions of higher education to develop and strengthen such programs. To accomplish this goal, the Department has gradually increased funding for UISFL by nearly \$2 million since the FY 2011 reduction. The FY 2017 budget provides funding for only continuation of the current cohort of grants, while this proposed modest increase would enable a competition for new grants to sustain momentum.

Fulbright-Hays—\$1.5 million over the FY 2016 level

- ***DDRA: A \$1 million increase over the FY 2016 level to fund 30 additional Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad (DDRA) fellowships in the critical languages and world areas of national need. The Administration's FY 2017 request provides no funds for DDRAs.*** DDRA funds individual doctoral students who conduct research overseas on foreign languages, area and international studies, especially in world regions not generally included in U.S. curricula. This amount would restore by nearly 50% the number of DDRAs awarded in FY 2010, just before the severe Fulbright-Hays reduction in FY 2011. The program is the main source of funding in the U.S. for DDRAs. A 2008 study prepared for the Department of Education found that 90% of DDRA fellows were employed in jobs related to the expertise gained through their fellowship.⁶
- ***GPA: A \$500,000 increase over the FY 2016 level to fund additional Group Projects Abroad (GPA) for advanced intensive language training and curriculum development opportunities overseas in strategic foreign languages and world areas of national need.*** This amount would enable additional group projects, including emphasis on broadening opportunities for underserved populations and institutions of higher education in curriculum development and advanced language training overseas. Projects may include short-term seminars, curriculum development, group research or study, or long-term advanced intensive language programs designed to increase language proficiency. Projects currently support professional development and essential overseas immersion training for pre- and in-service teachers of the critical languages with emphasis on K-12, community college and small four-year institutions. Advanced foreign language training projects also support students studying in areas vital to U.S. security and who intend a career in government, the professions or international development. A study of overseas immersion programs for in- and pre- service teachers of Russian found that 74% of Fulbright-Hays participants complete the program in the advanced proficiency range or higher, one full proficiency level more than their counterparts who did not partake in an overseas immersion program.⁷

⁶ Op.Cit., "A Study of Four Graduate Fellowship Programs," Executive Summary, p. xxix.

⁷ "Study Abroad: When, How Long, and with What Results? New Data from the Russian Front," *Foreign Language Annals*, Volume 43, No. 1, Spring 2010, pp. 6-26.

U.S. Department of Education Title VI & Fulbright-Hays Budget, FY10-17 *In Millions USD*



Coalition for International Education, February 2016