
July 12, 2011

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye, Chairman
The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Harkin, Chairman
The Honorable Richard Shelby, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Harold Rogers, Chairman
The Honorable Norm Dicks, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Denny Rehberg, Chairman
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear House and Senate Appropriations Committee Leadership:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2012 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we urge restoration of funding to the Fiscal Year 2010 level for the U.S. Department of Education's international education and foreign language studies programs, HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays. While we have a deep interest in many aspects of the bill, we firmly believe these programs to be a strategic investment in our nation's security and economic well-being.

We share collective concern across the nation over the severe and disproportionate reductions and eliminations to these programs resulting from the Fiscal Year 2011 Continuing Resolution. Continuing these levels in Fiscal Year 2012 would seriously damage our nation's world-class international education infrastructure, and thus weaken the expertise and knowledge important to our nation's ability to meet economic, global and security challenges.

Specifically, we strongly urge that the FY 2012 appropriations bill restore funding for the fourteen "educational pipeline" programs to the FY 2010 level of \$125.881 million.

A robust federal role in international education is vital to the national interest. Since the Sputnik era, Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs have been a successful partnership between the federal government and institutions of higher education. Federal resources serve as the lynchpin for investment in developing and sustaining a strong foundation of high quality national capacity in international education, research and foreign language studies, especially in the less-commonly taught languages and world areas of U.S. strategic interest. These programs also make possible extensive outreach and collaboration among government, education, and corporate sectors.

Our nation continues to face a dangerously short supply of Americans with in-depth knowledge of world regions and fluency in foreign languages and their cultures. We hope to work with you to ensure that Title VI and Fulbright-Hays funding for FY 2012 and beyond enhances, not stifles, our ability to address these issues by preparing the nation for 21st century global challenges.

Sincerely,

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