

COALITION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Promoting U.S. Global Competence

May 14, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye, Chairman
The Honorable Thad Cochran, Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate

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

Members and Staff of the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies Appropriations
U.S. Senate

FROM: The Coalition for International Education

RE: FY 2013 Funding for International Education and Foreign Language Studies:
The Higher Education Act, Title VI and Fulbright-Hays 102(b)(6)

The undersigned organizations of the Coalition for International Education appreciate the continued Congressional support for the U.S. Department of Education's premier international and foreign language education programs noted above.

We recognize the difficult choices on spending priorities that must be made as Congress seeks to reduce the deficit. Among the highest priorities should be education, including investment in international education, in which the federal government's role is critical. The nation needs a steady supply of graduates with deep expertise in strategic languages, world areas, transnational trends and global business, while the need for imparting basic global competencies to students across the educational spectrum is greater than ever.

We remain deeply concerned that the sudden and dramatic \$50 million or 40% cut in FY 2011, followed by an additional \$1.7 million or 2% cut in FY 2012, has eliminated or damaged programs vital to the national interest. **In light of continued overall education budget constraints, we urge Congress to safeguard these programs from further cuts, and to provide in FY 2013 no less than the President's FY 2013 request of \$75.729 million, which**

includes \$68.278 million for HEA-Title VI and \$7.451 million for Fulbright-Hays 102(b)(6). The amount proposed for Title VI restores the \$1.7 million cut Congress made in FY 2012.

HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays are the federal government's most comprehensive investment in the development of high quality *national capacity* in international, foreign language and global business education and research. Programs support complementary activities to create and sustain our international and foreign language education capabilities throughout the education pipeline. Unlike other federal agency programs supporting foreign language training, Title VI and Fulbright-Hays are foundational programs, supporting education and research in a wide variety of world areas, disciplines and languages (over 200) and at all levels of education, thus ensuring the nation's capacity to respond to new and unanticipated global challenges. **Today these programs represent roughly 0.1% of the Department of Education's discretionary budget, an extremely modest investment in a growing need vital to our national security and economic competitiveness.**

Following the events of September 11, 2001, Congress significantly enhanced these programs to increase the number of Americans trained in strategic foreign languages and targeted world areas of national need, such as Central and South Asia, the Middle East, Russia, and the Independent States of the former Soviet Union. Between FY 2000 - 2009, foreign language training capacity and the number of FLAS fellowships for these world areas nearly doubled. In some of the most critical languages, enrollments increased threefold. Unfortunately, the recent budget reductions have pushed back Title VI/Fulbright funding to pre-September 11, 2001 levels in current dollars, putting our nation's strengthened international education capacity at risk.

As a result of the FY 2011 cuts alone, we have seen the essential fabric of this world-class infrastructure begin to unravel, threatening most of the nation's foremost language, world area, and global business programs. Surveys on the impact of the FY 2011 cuts in the current (2011-2012) academic year indicate:

- Reduction or cancellation of over 400 less commonly-taught language and area studies classes in areas of national need, affecting over 6,300 students;
- Reductions in international business programs resulting in over 4,300 fewer graduates with international business expertise and 10,000 fewer business professionals trained;
- Reductions in language resources and research resulting in over 5,900 fewer language teachers trained, involving 29 languages of national need;
- Reductions or elimination of access to overseas research resources in strategic host countries for thousands of US scholars and study abroad students; and
- Reductions in international and foreign language expertise outreach forcing deep cuts to activities in K-12 schools, underrepresented populations, minority institutions of higher education, community colleges, businesses, as well as in federal, state and local agencies, including the military.

Continuation of the deep cuts noted above into FY 2013 and beyond will further weaken this infrastructure, as federal funding reductions will not be replaced with non-federal funds. Prolonging the losses will damage our long-term national security and global economic capabilities by reducing—and in some cases eliminating—the production of our next generation of international experts and a globally competent workforce, at the same time the nation's shortfalls in these areas continue to increase.

We appreciate your leadership in safeguarding this modest Department of Education investment that is so vital to America's wellbeing. Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Submitted by the following organizations:

African Studies Association
Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
American Council on Education
American Political Science Association
American University of Beirut
Association of American Universities
Association of International Education Administrators
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association for Asian Studies
Association for International Business Education and Research
Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council of American Overseas Research Centers
Council of Directors of National Foreign Language Resource 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
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Humanities Alliance
North American Small Business International Trade Educators Association
Social Science Research Council