

(Same letter sent to members of the Senate Labor—HHS-Education Subcommittee)



American Council on Education
Coalition for International Education

April 18, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations

FROM: The Coalition for International Education

RE: FY 2007 Funding for International Education and Foreign Language Studies:

- The Higher Education Act, Title VI and Fulbright-Hays 102(b)(6)
- The President's *National Security Initiative (NSLI)* in the Department of Education
- International Consortia Programs in the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)

The undersigned organizations of the Coalition for International Education appreciate your continued leadership and support for the Higher Education Act, Title VI, International Education Programs, its complementary program, Fulbright-Hays 102(b)(6), and the international consortia programs in the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) in FY 2006. We are pleased to present our views and funding recommendations for these programs and for the portion of the President's *National Security Language Initiative* in the U.S. Department of Education.

The war in Iraq and on global terrorism and growing challenges to U.S. economic leadership continue to bring attention and urgency to America's international preparedness. The July 2004 *Report of the Joint (House-Senate) Inquiry into the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001*, the January 2005 Department of Defense *Defense Language Transformation Roadmap*, the President's January 2006 *National Security Language Initiative (NSLI)*, and most recently the February 2006 Committee for Economic Development report *Education for Global Leadership* all underscore an urgent 21st century education challenge. The nation needs more specialists in foreign languages, cultures and international business in government, the private sector, educational institutions and the media, as well as greater citizen understanding of the world. Fortunately because of the investments in HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays, the nation has a strong infrastructure in place upon which to build a response.

I. The Higher Education Act, Title VI and Fulbright-Hays 102(b)(6)

As the lynchpin for producing these specialists for nearly five decades, the Higher Education Act, Title VI and Fulbright-Hays 102(b)(6) develop and sustain over time a strong U.S. infrastructure in international education and 226 foreign languages critical to U.S. economic and security interests. These programs leverage a large amount of additional nonfederal resources and are relied upon by other federal and nonfederal programs. Unfortunately, historical under-funding of Title VI and Fulbright-Hays combined with expanding needs and rising costs have contributed to the nation's shortfall in specialists today.

The President's FY 2007 budget recommends \$106.75 million for Title VI and Fulbright-Hays.

This represents a \$1 million increase over FY 2006 for Title VI domestic programs "to establish a nationwide distance education E-learning Clearinghouse to deliver foreign language education resources to teachers and students across the country," as part of the President's *National Security Language Initiative (NSLI)*. We support creation of the clearinghouse under Title VI.

At the same time, we are concerned that funding is frozen at last year's level for existing Title VI domestic programs, Fulbright-Hays programs, and the Institute for International Public Policy. Proposed level funding for FY 2007 coupled with cuts in the previous three years represents an 8% decrease below FY 2003 levels adjusted for inflation. The reduction in funding has taken a significant toll on programs. For example, though stipend levels for the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) academic year fellowships have received a needed increase, the number of these academic year fellowships has fallen cumulatively by 258 over the past three years. FLAS fellowships are key incentives to advanced language study, especially in the less commonly taught languages critical to national security.

We strongly urge that the infusion of new funding that Congress began in FY 2002-03 be resumed. To restore programs to FY 2003 levels in constant dollars, we recommend a total of \$114.2 million, an \$8.4 million or 8% increase over FY 2006. This includes \$98.6 million for Title VI-A&B—a \$7 million increase; \$13.6 million for Fulbright-Hays 102(b)(6)—a \$1 million increase; and \$2 million for the Institute for International Public Policy, Title VI-C—a \$0.4 million increase over FY 2006. With additional funding, these programs can be strengthened to more effectively increase the nation's pool of foreign language and area expertise and research; infuse an international and foreign language dimension into business and other professional education, undergraduate education, and K-12 teacher training and curriculum development; enhance citizen understanding of global issues; and increase the number of underrepresented minorities in international service.

II. The President's *National Security Language Initiative (NSLI)* in the Department of Education

We applaud the increased attention on foreign language education in the President's *NSLI*. Most of the proposed new funding in the Department of Education would focus on activities to strengthen the K-12 pipeline in certain critical languages. **Among various proposed initiatives, the President's budget requests \$24 million in new funding and new authorizing legislation for the *Advancing America Through Foreign Language Partnerships (K-16)* program.** We believe that this proposed program can be carried out under HEA-Title VI, Fulbright-Hays and the (K-12) Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) without authorizing a separate new program. **Therefore, we recommend that the \$24 million be provided to these programs for the K-16 initiative.** In addition, we support the President's proposed **\$23.8 million for FLAP, as well as a new Language Teacher Corps (\$5 million) and a new Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative (\$3 million) under the Fund for the Improvement of Education.**

Many *NSLI* programs must rely on HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays for expertise and educational materials. Furthermore, increasing the number of high school graduates entering college with foreign language skills will increase the demand for programs in higher education, such as those funded under Title VI and Fulbright-Hays. Many questions remain about how the President's initiatives will quickly fill the serious shortage of certified K-12 critical language teachers while at the same time initiating new K-12 programs. We believe that the considerable expertise in existing federal education programs should play an essential role in the planning, development and implementation activities under the new initiatives, and therefore can be best carried out under existing legislative frameworks.

III. International Consortia Programs in the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)

The undersigned organizations support a continued effort to restore funding for **the international consortia programs of the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE)**. These programs fund innovations in international and foreign language education and cooperative grant programs with institutions overseas. The President's FY 2007 budget recommends \$4.6 million, which is \$200,000 above FY 2006. **We propose \$5.72 million for FY 2007, a \$1.32 million increase over FY 2006, which would adjust for inflation and move toward restoring programs to FY 2004 funding levels.**

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was speaking about HEA-Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs, among others, when she stated on January 5, 2006 at the *Summit of U.S. University Presidents on International Education*,

“In the Cold War, we faced down an ideology of Communism...this country made a huge intellectual investment in winning the Cold War. In universities across the country, people studied the cultures and the languages of Eastern Europe and of Asia and of places that we had not known before World War II and had not been. ... And we made a huge investment -- intellectual investment -- in getting young people to learn about those cultures and those languages. I was one of those young people who fell in love with the study of the Soviet Union and of Russia. But I was also told that it was a patriotic and good thing to do for my country. We have not as a country made the kind of intellectual investment that we need to make in the exchange of peoples, in the exchange of ideas, in languages and in cultures and our knowledge of them that we made in the Cold War.”

Thank you for considering our suggested funding levels. We realize the fiscal constraints Congress faces this year, but also believe our proposals to be a sound investment toward strengthening our nation's security and economic well being in this time of complex global challenges. We look forward to working with Subcommittee Members and staff.

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 Council on Education
American Council on International Intercultural Education
American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS
American Political Science Association
American University of Beirut
Association of American Universities
Association for International Business Education and Research
Association of International Education Administrators
Association of Research Libraries
The College Fund/UNCF
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Council of American Overseas Research Centers

RE: FY 2007 Funding for International Education and Foreign Language Studies
April 18, 2006
Page 4

Council of Directors of National Foreign Language Resource Centers
Council of Directors of National Resource Centers
Council for Opportunity in Education
The Forum on Education Abroad
Joint National Committee for Languages
Latin American Studies Association
Middle East Studies Association
National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
National Humanities Alliance

cc: Staff of the Subcommittee Members